



Faculty & Student Handbook
Revised February 2013

Table of Contents

Section 1	The Honors Mission Statement	3
Section 2	Program Structure, Facilities, Resources and Benefits	4
Section 3	Admission and Good Standing	6
Section 4	Scholarships and Travel Awards	8
Section 5	How to Become a Program Graduate	12
Section 6	Course Contracts	17
Section 7	Curriculum	20

Section 1 The Honors Mission Statement

The Honors Program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi offers enriched plans of study to highly motivated students who have the ability to excel academically and the desire to develop global perspectives. Consistent with the university's aspiration to "close the gaps" among historically under-represented populations, the program seeks to attract and retain a broad and diverse population of students. A successful Honors experience requires an exceptional commitment from participating students and faculty. Honors students are challenged with innovative, participatory, and rigorous learning experiences in a community of similarly motivated learners. Faculty members provide both discipline-specific and interdisciplinary instruction as well as facilitate extracurricular opportunities. Faculty also provide personal mentoring for and collaborative partnerships with their students. Students and faculty have a unique opportunity in the Honors Program for development and recognition of their interests, skills, abilities, and potential.

The goals of the Program are to:

- Inspire students to excel beyond their expectations.
- Enable students to develop their fullest possible intellectual potential.
- Set high standards for academic performance and interaction with the world beyond the university.
- Break down barriers to high academic performance and create a venue for broadening the learning community.
- Renew and refresh faculty commitment to scholarship and instruction.
- Provide accomplished students and faculty with recognition and esteem.



Section 2 Program Structure, Facilities, Resources and Benefits

Staff Structure

A full time Administrative Director manages and oversees many elements of the Program, from policies and procedures, to scholarships and admissions. A quarter time Academic Director chairs the Honors Council and oversees all issues related to academics within the program, including course offerings, mentoring Project of Excellence students, recruiting faculty to teach courses and mentoring students on probation. A part time administrative assistant oversees the Honors Computer Lab and assists both directors with maintaining files and processing paperwork.

Honors Council

The Honors Council assists the directors in matters of policy, planning, admissions, student support, and recruitment. Members are appointed by the academic vice president in consultation with the Honors Academic Director. Membership is composed of five faculty representatives (one from each college), two student representatives, a representative from Bell Library, Student Affairs, Community Outreach, Enrollment Management, and the Office of Development. The Honors Academic Director chairs the Honors Council. Faculty are appointed for two-year renewable terms. The student representatives are elected by the Honors Student Association and appointed to a renewable one-year term. Standing subcommittees of the Council are: admissions, co-curricular/extra-curricular activities, curriculum, scholarship, and assessment.

2012-2013 Honors Council members are:

Representing	Name	Phone	Email	Office	Unit #
Honors Academic Director, Chair	Don Berkich	x3726	don.berkich@tamucc.edu	FC 283	5814
Honors Administrative Director, Ex-Officio	Stephanie Box	x3926	Stephanie.box@tamucc.edu	CCH 291F	5751
College of Business	Alexandra Theodossiou	x2769	alexandra.theodossiou@tamucc.edu	OC 348	5808
College of Nursing and Health Sciences	Leigh Shaver	x3429	leigh.shaver@tamucc.edu	IH 339	5804
College of Science and Engineering	Cherie McCollough	x3166	Cherie.McCollough@tamucc.edu	ST310A	5800
College of Liberal Arts	Susan Wolf Murphy	x2640	susan.murphy@tamucc.edu	FC 127	5707
College of Education	Karen Paciotti	x3899	karen.paciotti@tamucc.edu	FC 220	5834
Student	Melissa Beeler		mbeeler@islander.tamucc.edu		

Representative, Curriculum					
Student Representative, Extra/Co-curricular	Daniel Martinez		dmartinez23@islander.tamucc.edu		
Library	Jennifer Anderson	x3321	jennifer.anderson@tamucc.edu	LIB 112C	5702
Student Affairs	Angela Walker	X2612	Angela.walker@tamucc.edu	UC 318	5792
Community Outreach	Jim Needham	x2708	james.needham@tamucc.edu	NRC 2204	5854
Enrollment Management	Margaret Dechant	x5951	margaret.dechant@tamucc.edu	SSC 200	5771
Office of Development	Open				

Honors Student Association

The Honors Student Association (HSA) is a very active organization whose goal is to provide Honors students with leadership experiences, community and university involvement. HSA members participate in a variety of service projects and attend campus and community events together. They also have the opportunity to take kayak or surfing lessons and go on an overnight field trip to the university's Laguna Madre Field Station.

All Honors students are strongly encouraged to become an active member of HSA. Please visit HSA's website for more information, which is available through <http://honors.tamucc.edu>, then click on Honors Student Association. Honors students should also join HSA's organization portal by going to www.tamucc.orgsync.com, creating an account and then searching for HSA.

Facilities

Honors students have access to the Honors Study Room in CCH 262, which is composed of a study area, presentation practice room, informal meeting space and classroom. There is a large conference table, computer/projector, couches, desks, refrigerator, and a microwave.

To gain access to either room, students must have their SandDollar card programmed, similar to a hotel key system. Please check with the Director for more information on getting access to either room.

Honors students that misuse either facility may have their access removed.

Program Events

Each year, the Honors Program hosts several events during the year to celebrate our students and support their academic endeavors. Attendance is mandatory at the events with an asterisk. Those events are:

**Fall and Spring Retreat:* Held at the beginning of each semester, the retreat is a time for all Honors students to gather, get to know each other, focus on the goals of the program and discuss various topics of interest.

**Symposium:* The Symposium is held before finals each semester. Students that received an Honors travel award, contracted a course, completed a Directed Independent Study (DIS), Honors internship or applied experience will conduct a brief presentation on their experience and/or research.

**Recognition and Awards Ceremony:* Held in March or April, the Honors students, faculty and supporters attend this annual event to recognize the Program Graduates, graduating seniors, Honors faculty members, new members and others. It is an important to recognize the outstanding achievements of the Honors community.

Service projects: The Honors Program and HSA partners with local community agencies to provide services to the residents of the Coastal Bend. Activities vary from beach clean ups to working at a soup kitchen.

Recruiting: Honors students help recruit new students into the Program through participation in events such as Island Day and Orientation. Students assist in this capacity as they are able to do so.

Extra and co-curricular activities: Typically, we go on a kayaking adventure in the fall and an overnight excursion to the Laguna Madre Field Station in the spring. Attendance at both events is limited and a small, refundable deposit may be required. Additional excursions may be offered depending on availability.

Additional Benefits

Early registration: all Honors students, regardless of academic class, are able to register for classes on the first day of registration. Students must register in person at the Round Building (Student Services Center).

Extended Library check out: Honors student are able to check out books from Bell Library for 6 weeks instead of 3 weeks.

Networking & Mentoring: There are many faculty and staff members that will offer more in-depth and encouraging mentoring and coaching. Honors students have the opportunity to work with other students through the Honors Students Association with remarkable, bright, socially gifted individuals in a variety of activities.

Section 3 Admissions and Good Standing

Admission

The Honors Program accepts applications year round, although applicants may not be immediately interviewed. The Program will set at least two distinct periods for interview days for each cohort. The deadlines to apply for each interview period will be posted on the Honors website.

The Program's goal is to have between 30-50 qualified students admitted to the Program for each cohort.

While reviewing Honors applications, the Admissions Committee will consider the following:

- Writing skills

- Analytical skills
- Previous academic performance
- Potential for future academic success
- Personality
- Likelihood of completing the Honors Program Graduate requirements

Transfer Students

Admission of students transferring from other university-level honors programs

A student transferring from another honors program must meet the admission requirements of the TAMUCC Honors Program. Due to the 21 Honors hour minimum requirement to graduate from the Honors Program, students may not apply beyond the beginning of their junior year.

Transfer Credit

Students may transfer into the TAMUCC Honors Program up to twelve hours of honors credit from another college or university. Each course is subject to review by the Academic Director and a consulting honors faculty member. Criteria for acceptance is determined by 1) equivalency to TAMUCC's own Honors courses in terms of both coverage and rigor and 2) a final grade of B- or higher has been earned in each of the courses being transferred. Applicants should note that transfer course credit from other accredited colleges and universities and transferring Honors course credit do not constitute the same process. Courses that are accepted by the university in partial fulfillment of a student's degree plan may or may not be also accepted by the TAMUCC Honors Program as honors-level credit.

Maintaining Good Standing

Once students are admitted to the Honors Program, it is important to remain actively involved with Program activities. Honors students must remain in good standing or probationary standing with the Program and the University. Being in good standing means a student is eligible for Honors Program scholarships, travel awards, early registration and other benefits. Good standing is defined as:

- Attending 1 of the 2 retreat each academic year;
- Attending 1 of the 2 Symposia each academic year (for ½ of event);
- Attending the Honors Ball;
- Participating in 1 community service project per semester, which is encouraged to be done with other Honors students. This must be *in the local community*, giving back to an educational or non-profit organization. Service for the University (including any university department) does not count. The goal is for students to work to better the community they live in. Fundraising for a non-profit does not count (such as participating in and/or collecting money for a benefit walk); volunteering at a fundraising event does count (such as checking in runners for a race that benefits a charity);
 - You are responsible for submitting a timesheet for this event through OrgSync. If you do not have an account or need help, contact me or an officer for help.
- Attending 1 on campus or university sponsored academic event per semester. Travel to a conference does not count unless the conference was sponsored or co-sponsored by the university. Sponsor or co-sponsor means the university planned or assisted in the planning of the actual event. It does not mean the university helped fund your trip to a conference;

- i. You are responsible for submitting a timesheet for this event through OrgSync. If you do not have an account or need help, contact me or an officer for help.
- f. Absences: if a student has to miss events listed in a-c, s/he should notify the Director immediately. Not all absences will be excused. Excessive use of excused absences (i.e. "I can't attend anything ever") will not be tolerated. All dates for a-c above are available on the Honors website; events are also posted on OrgSync and reminders are sent via the listserv and on www.facebook.com/tamucchonors.
 - i. An RSVP of "no" on OrgSync does not mean you are excused. Send the director an email, write a note or actually talk to him/her.
- g. Maintaining a minimum 3.0 cumulative TAMUCC grade point average (minimum requirement set by the university);
 - i. Seniors must be at or very near their cohort's Program Graduate GPA requirement (3.0 through cohort 5 and 3.25 for cohorts 6-8).
 - ii. Beginning with Cohort 10 (admitted Fall 2013 and beyond), students need a 3.5 cumulative TAMUCC GPA in order to become a *Program Graduate* (the GPAs listed below will only affect scholarship eligibility in the senior year). In order to meet the Program Graduate requirement, we encourage students to meet or exceed these minimum cumulative GPA standards:
 1. Freshmen year: 3.0
 2. Sophomore year: 3.25
 3. Junior year: 3.4
 4. Senior year: 3.5
- h. Being free of major disciplinary violations as documented by the Office of Judicial Affairs. Students who are found responsible for violations of the Student Code of Conduct are encouraged to notify the Director immediately. The Honors Council will review the details of each case to determine if the violation warrants disciplinary action from the Honors Program. Violations that warrant serious and immediate attention include:
 - i. Academic violations such as cheating or plagiarism;
 - ii. Acts of physical violence or emotional/mental abuse such as intimidation, bullying, or harassment.

Probation

If an Honors student does not meet all of the above requirements, he/she is placed on "probationary standing" for the following semester. The student will need to meet all good standing requirements in order to be removed from probation. Failure to do so will result in the student being suspended (removed) from the Honors Program. A student may appeal their suspension from the Program through the Honors Council.

Failure to meet the minimum grade point average

If the student is on probation because the student's cumulative or semester GPA fell below a 3.0 during any long semester, he/she is asked to speak with the Academic Director and possibly, select representatives from the Honors Council. The meeting is intended to discuss the reasons why the GPA is low and strategies for the student to increase his/her GPA the following semester.

While on probation, if the student's semester GPA falls below 3.0 at any time, the student is suspended and will have to petition for readmission to the program once his or her GPA is higher. Students can appeal to the Honors Council to continue the probation status.

Note: Consistent with University policy, only grades earned at TAMUCC will be used to calculate grade point average. Grades are reviewed only in the fall and spring semesters.

Academic Integrity and Honesty

Honors students are expected to demonstrate the highest level of maturity, self-direction, and ability to manage their own affairs. Students in the Honors Program are expected to comply with the rules and regulations of the university as defined in the Student Code of Conduct and the Honors Student Code of Conduct. Infractions of the Codes will be met with sanctions determined by the Honors Council commensurate with the seriousness of the offense

Section 4 Scholarships and Travel Awards

The University has guaranteed scholarship funding in the amount of \$100,000 just for Honors Students. Additional funds may be available from other sources, but those are not guaranteed and vary from year to year. The Scholarship Committee will review all scholarship applications and make award determinations.

Scholarships are based on classification – freshmen, sophomore, junior or senior. Eligibility and award calculation information is listed below.

The Director will set deadlines for fall/spring, spring only and summer only scholarships. Students should have no less than 2 weeks' notice to submit their application.

Eligibility

For scholarship consideration, a student must have completed one semester as an Honors student (with the exception of new member awards), be an Honors student in good standing with a TAMUCC cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 and meet or exceed the following measures:

- a. Attended 1 of the 2 retreat each academic year;
- b. Attended 1 of the 2 Symposia each academic year (for ½ of event);
- c. Attended the Honors Ball;
- d. Participated in 1 community service project per semester, which is encouraged to be done with other Honors students. This must be *in the local community*, giving back to an educational or non-profit organization. Service for the University (including any university department) does not count.
- e. Attended 1 on campus or university sponsored academic event per semester. Travel to a conference does not count unless the conference was sponsored or co-sponsored by the university. Sponsor or co-sponsor means the university planned or assisted in the planning of the actual event. It does not mean the university helped fund your trip to a conference;
- f. A student must meet all scholarship eligibility requirements the year prior to (except for new members) and the year of receiving the scholarship.

1. During the fall semester of the scholarship, should a student fail to attend an Honors Program event without an acceptable excuse, then the student will lose the scholarship for the spring semester. Please see good standing section of handbook for information on excused absences.
2. In the instance above, the student would also lose eligibility to receive a scholarship for the following academic year.

Classification notes:

- a. Classification will be determined by the number of total hours (TAMUCC and transfer credits) at the end of the spring semester for the following academic year. In some cases, we may look at the number of semesters completed instead of number of hours.
 1. Example: student has 90 hours after only 2 years on campus due to AP, dual credit and summer courses, yet still have 3 more years in his/her degree plan. In cases such as this, the committee may count the student as a sophomore (or junior, as appropriate).
- b. For each classification, a student may only receive a scholarship in that amount for 2 semesters. For example, if a student is classified as a sophomore for 3 semesters, he can only get a sophomore scholarship for the first 2 semesters. During the 3rd sophomore semester, he is not eligible for a scholarship.
- c. Students are not reclassified mid-year for scholarship purposes. For example, if a student changes from sophomore to junior status in one academic year, that student remains at the sophomore amount the entire year.

Selection of Recipients

All awards are competitive and merit based. There are different qualifications for different classifications.

- a. New admit scholarships are available as a recruitment tool to encourage students to apply for the Honors Program. New students that are ranked highly through the admissions process will be awarded a scholarship. These can be awarded to freshmen, sophomore and junior new admits. However, the availability of scholarships for each classification may be limited. The Scholarship Committee will determine the number of new admit awards.
- b. Freshman, sophomore and junior scholarships are available to returning Honors students. Applications will be ranked according to the following rubric:
 1. Scholarly activities & accomplishments: 50%
 2. Leadership, campus and community involvement: 35%
 3. Number of honors hours taken: 15%
- c. Senior scholarships are available only to seniors that will complete a Project of Excellence. Thus, seniors will solely be ranked on the quality of their PofE proposal, as determined by the Curriculum Committee. Seniors must still meet the basic eligibility requirements stated above.

Determination of Scholarship Numbers

The Scholarship Committee meets each year to determine how to allocate the scholarship funds, including the number and amount for each class. They will use the current roster as a reference point for setting the number per class.

The following table shows a sample of how scholarships will be divided. This plan assumes that we will have \$110,000 for the year. Percentages and actual number of scholarships for each award is subject to slight adjustment based on the number of applicants for each one. The Scholarship Committee may adjust the award amount per class based on relevant data.

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total
Amount per student*	\$750	\$1,000	\$1,250	\$4,000	\$7,000
Percentage per class	11%	14%	18%	57%	
Awards per class	9	10	14	19	

*Amount per student is not exactly the percentage of total; they have been rounded to make the amounts more even. For example, instead of freshmen getting \$770, it is rounded to \$750.

Study Abroad and Summer Scholarships

Study Abroad

When possible, the committee will set aside a small portion of the scholarship funds for students that will Study Abroad. The amount will be partly determined by the type of study abroad programs being offered. Study abroad scholarship supplements can only be granted for credit hours that will be earned through registration for TAMUCC courses. Students must meet credit hour requirements as set by the Scholarship Office in order to be eligible (usually 6 hours in one session* or 12 hours between Maymester, Summer 1 and 2).

All students must comply with the requirements of TAMUCC's Office of International Education to be considered for these awards. All such awards are competitive with preference given to students who will be earning Honors credit.

Summer

Funds may be available for summer coursework at TAMUCC. These awards are competitive and students must meet the general scholarship eligibility requirements. Students must meet credit hour requirements as set by the Scholarship Office in order to be eligible (usually 6 hours in one session* OR 12 hours between Maymester, Summer 1 and 2).

*Maymester and Summer 1 are counted as one session. Therefore, a student taking 3 hours in Maymester and 3 hours in Summer 1 will be counted as taking 6 hours during Summer 1.

Honors Student Travel Awards

Purpose: The Honors Program has funding available to support student travel to participate in conferences and other academic or professional venues that will enhance their educational experience. Funding will be awarded on the purpose of the proposal and available funding.

Eligibility: These travel awards are primarily for students who are (1) presenting a paper or poster at a regional, national, or international conference; (2) conducting research; or (3) professional development. For consideration, an applicant must be an Honors student in good standing (see Section 3).

Process: Applications for travel awards should be submitted to the Honors Director as soon as an invitation to the event is received and no less than one month prior to the proposed travel. The application must include:

- the completed application cover sheet (attached)
- a copy of the invitation to present or attend the conference or event
- a copy of the abstract or other submitted conference materials (if applicable)
- a budget of all related expenses
- a signature of support from a faculty member familiar with the travel project

If more than one student is requesting travel funding to the same conference or event, each student must complete a separate application. Applications will be reviewed by the Director. Travel awards will be awarded based on the merit of the request and available funding. Applications may be fully funded, partially funded, or not funded. All students who are awarded travel funding are expected to present a brief description of their trip during the Honors Symposium. Students approved by the program for travel awards must comply with all relevant policies and procedures of the University to receive funding, including but not limited to University Rule 13.04.99.C1 and University Procedure 13.04.99.C1.01. Failure to do so may result in the award being disallowed.

Section 5 How to Become an Honors Program Graduate

Not all Honors students will meet the high standards to become an Honors Program Graduate due to the intense requirements. However, those that do complete it will be fully prepared to enter a competitive post baccalaureate program (such as a Master's degree program or Professional Health program, such as medical school). The requirements and benefits of becoming an Honors Program Graduate are listed below.

Honors Program Grades

To earn Honors credit in an Honors Program course, the student must earn a B or better. A lower grade will not count toward earned honors credits. In a contracted course, the student must earn a B or better for Honors credit.

Requirements to become an Honors Program Graduate

Cohorts 3 through 9 (admitted Fall 2006 through Fall 2012)

- Complete a minimum of 21 Honors course hours.
- For Cohorts 1-6 (admitted before May 2010), the TAMUCC cumulative GPA must be at or above a 3.0. For Cohorts 6-9 (admitted between June 2010-March 2013), the TAMUCC cumulative GPA must be at or above a 3.25.

- Successful completion of HONR 4195, Project of Excellence. Part of the requirements of this course will be submission of the Honors Portfolio.
- Exit interview approximately one month before graduation date.

Cohorts 10 and beyond

- Completion of 30 hours of specific coursework or alternatives as approved by the Headmaster and/or Honors Curriculum Committee.
 - UCCP 1101.H01 and 1102.H02 Honors First Year Seminar
 - PHIL 2303.H01: Honors Introduction to Logic
 - ENGL 3363.H01: Honors Rhetoric
 - HONR 2101.H01 and 2102.H01 Honors Sophomore Seminar
 - COMM 1315.H01: Honors Public Speaking
 - PHIL 3340.H01: Honors Professional Ethics
 - ECON 2302.H01: Honors Microeconomics Principles
 - HONR 3491: Science and Technology for Decision Makers
 - HONR 3101.H01 and 3102.H01 Honors Junior Seminar
 - ENGL 3361.H01: Honors Strategies and Genres of Advanced Writing
 - HONR 4101.H01 & 4102.H01 Honors Junior Seminars
 - HONR 4101.H01 and 4102.H01 Honors Senior Seminars
- Completion of the Project of Excellence through the Honors Senior Seminars.
- Have a minimum TAMUCC cumulative GPA of a 3.5.

Transcript Entry and Medallion: Upon verification of the student's completion of Honors Program Requirements, his/her transcript will read "Graduate of the Honors Program." The graduate will also be awarded an Honors Program Medallion, to be worn at the Honors Ceremony and Commencement.

Project of Excellence

As the senior capstone of the overall Honors experience, the Project of Excellence (HONR 4195) is required of all students who graduate from the Honors Program. The Project provides each student the opportunity to design and implement work unique to his/her own major and interest. It consists of a paper, performance, or presentation of research results typical of professional work in the major field. *Note: cohorts 10 and above will complete the PofE through the senior seminar, not in HONR 4195.

Ideally, the Project of Excellence grows out of inquiry, problem-solving, and research that begins in the Honors core courses, then develops in Honors contracting, upper-division, internships, and directed independent study courses. As the capstone experience, the Project of Excellence allows the student to integrate previous work and produce an original work of significant scope and importance while collaborating one-on-one with a faculty mentor.

The Project must be approved beforehand by the Honors Council and college in which the student is enrolled, and supervised by an Honors faculty member. Results of the Project of Excellence will be presented publicly to Honors students and faculty at the end of the semester and housed permanently in the Honors Program Office.

Timeline for the Project of Excellence:

1. Ideally, the Project will be completed over a course of 2 semesters or a summer and a semester.
2. Select your faculty mentor and develop a proposal at the end of your junior year. The proposal will be approved by your mentor (who will be the teacher of record for the course), the Honors Headmaster, and the Honors Curriculum Committee.
3. Register for the Project of Excellence the semester prior to graduation. This will be coordinated by the Director.
4. Presentation of your Project will be scheduled by the Honors Director upon its completion.

Project Proposal (must be approved before you can register for HONR 4195):

Must include:

- Title page
- Approval page
- Introduction to the problem / issues, including the context and rationale for the project. Your introduction should have appropriate citations from primary literature in a documentation style customary in your discipline. Also identify your over-all goal: are you developing this project to publish your research, refine your skills, demonstrate your knowledge of a particular subject, or to more deeply study a topic or concept?
- Project hypothesis or objectives.
- Methods of approach - how will you test the hypothesis or achieve your objectives?
- Outcome - what format will your completed Project take?
- Bibliography with a minimum of 15 sources
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (when necessary)
- Timeline - when you intend to complete primary research, dates that drafts will be completed, and times that you can discuss these drafts with your faculty mentor.

Guidelines for the Project of Excellence process

- To ensure that students receive feedback and guidance during the entire process, the role of the faculty member-of-record and Honors Council will be on-going and not simply as gatekeeper reviewing the final product.
- College representatives on the Council will be doing the reading for the Honors Program. A faculty member in the particular area of specialty might also be consulted. The Director may also read the final projects.
- Students will meet weekly with the Headmaster to discuss their progress and for peer review. The Headmaster will inform students of the day and time of these meetings. Attendance at these meetings is mandatory and the Headmaster should be notified in advance of any absences.

- At least 3 drafts will be necessary to produce an acceptable final project. The process will also include time in case there are still problems with the third draft.
- Projects will be judged as accomplished, competent, or still developing. See rubric for more detailed information about requirements.

Required format for the final Project of Excellence paper

- Title Page to include: title, name, date, cohort number, and Project of Excellence faculty mentor.
- A one-page abstract
- If a running title is used it must be limited to 50 characters
- Electronic copy of the final project is to be emailed to the Director upon completion. The file will be stored for a minimum of 5 years after the student graduates.

Note: in the case of Projects in the Arts, where the final “product” does not take on a thesis format, a written component will still be required (script of the play, verbal analysis/commentary of the art or photography, etc.). Digital videos or photographs are appreciated as well.

Evaluating the Project of Excellence:

For a written thesis / report of primary research

Your faculty mentor, the Honors Academic Director, and two other reviewers (from your field of study and/or the Honors Council) will evaluate your Project. Here are the areas that will be graded as “Developing,” “Competent,” or “Accomplished” (modeled on the rubric from Texas A&M University at College Station):

- Document Design (including documentation conventions)
- Quality of the writing (sentence level features, flow, clarity)
- Organization
- Literature Review / use of sources
- Data
- Analysis of Research
- Argument
- Thesis and its contribution to the field / originality

Evaluation method

A Project evaluated as “Accomplished” by all reviewers in 5 of these 8 areas will be pronounced “Completed with Distinction.” A Project evaluated as “Developing” in 4 of the areas by the majority of reviewers will be graded “incomplete” until the student revises and resubmits the Project for further consideration. Until the “I” is removed, a student’s transcript will not show “Graduate of the Honors Program” or “Graduate of the Honors Program. If the student does not revise the Project, the “I” will remain permanently on the transcript.

For an original performance / music or art project / teaching or service project

Your faculty mentor, the Honors Academic Director, and two other reviewers (from your field of study and/or the Honors Council) will evaluate your Project. Here are the areas that will be graded as “Developing,” “Competent,” or “Accomplished”:

- Strength of concept
- Design and competition
- Technical use of materials

Presentation
Integration of research / resources (when appropriate)

Evaluation method

A Project evaluated as “Accomplished” by all reviewers in 5 of these 8 areas will be pronounced “Completed with Distinction.” A Project evaluated as “Developing” in 4 of the areas by the majority of reviewers will be graded “incomplete” until the student revises and resubmits the Project for further consideration. Until the “I” is removed, a student’s transcript will not show “Graduate of the Honors Program.” If the student does not revise the Project, the “I” will remain permanently on the transcript.

The Oral Presentation for all Projects of Excellence

This is a forum open to honors students, faculty members, and Council members. You will be asked to talk about your research, demonstrating the sort of comfort level with your topic that comes from truly understanding the concepts you set forth in your Project of Excellence. The reviewers of your Project will certainly have questions for you.

Honors Program Portfolio

As a requirement of the Project of Excellence, honors students are asked to maintain a portfolio of their academic work to be handed in during the semester they enroll in the Project of Excellence for 25% of their final grade in that course. The portfolio will be used to assess the achievement and development of each student as well as to assess the Honors Program as a whole. All portfolios will be kept permanently on file in the Honors office.

Although the portfolio is not linked to a specific course or activity, honors faculty and the honors director are available to answer questions, provide advice, or offer feedback. Nevertheless each student is responsible to collect and include materials that represent a thoughtful review of his/her *development* in general requirements areas of Honors Program courses. In selecting what to include think especially about those materials that reflect your:

- writing ability
- critical thinking and meta-cognitive abilities (including consideration of multiple or conflicting perspectives)
- research abilities (including extensive use of the resources in the library)
- interdisciplinary perspective on a given subject
- leadership, collaboration, and problem-solving capabilities
- involvement in service learning and community involvement.

Development marks a deepening of knowledge, understanding, and capabilities over time. Thus students are asked to provide multiple examples of each of the above outcomes (e.g., one from early in the honors experience, mid-way, and at the end) and write a reflective essay for each inclusion, explaining how in particular this inclusion shows development combined to earlier samples. The Portfolios should be thought of as an argument, and rhetorically designed and organized accordingly.

The Honors Program is most interested in your work in Honors courses and Honors co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities. We will be looking for evidence that the Honors experience has provided opportunities for significant learning experiences. However, if capabilities fostered and developed in the Program impact other classes, the student may make judicious use of those materials.

Size of Binder: one-inch with the student's name on the spine.

Portfolio Due Date: October 1 for fall project completion and February 15 for spring project completion.

Evaluation: Reviewers will include your faculty of record for HONR 4195, an Honors Program student, and the Honors Academic Director. Of these reviewers, the Academic Director will examine the portfolio last, balancing the other evaluations and also considering the student's work in relation to his or her peers and previous students' portfolios. In some cases, a faculty member in your major area may also be consulted. Evaluation will be in accordance with a rubric that will be provided to you in advance. Your portfolio will be judged accomplished, competent, or developing as a result of this initial review and ratings will be provided for each category; however, the emphasis at this point will be to provide you with constructive feedback on all elements. You and your faculty mentor will receive a copy of the results and comments that come out of this process. You will then have up to 30 days to revise the portfolio before submitting it in final form to the Honors Director. The director will evaluate the portfolio again and advise you and your faculty mentor of the final portfolio grade, providing feedback on the results of your effort to address concerns noted in the initial review. A final portfolio evaluated as "developing" in two or more categories, or receiving an overall score of less than 80 points, will not receive honors credit. Once the portfolio has met program requirements, the faculty of record will be free to assign the portfolio grade as 25% of the total grade in HONR 4195.

Section 6 Honors Course Contracts

Honors contracting is a means to help Honors Program who have difficulty finding upper-division Honors courses within the parameters of their degree. Contracting allows an Honors student to receive Honors credit for a non-Honors course by completing work that is above and beyond, even different from, what is required of students in the course. Honors contracting is one of five ways students may receive Honors credit outside upper-division Honors courses. The other methods are: Honors courses, Honors Directed Independent Study, Honors Internship, and Honors Applied Experience.

Deadlines: For fall and spring, the deadline is two weeks from the first day of classes. For summer sessions, the deadline is the third class day. Time is measured from the first day of a semester's/session's classes, not from the first day the particular class meets. Contact applications are to be submitted to the director.

Requirements:

- Honors contracts are available only to students who are participants in the University Honors Program and therefore have met all appropriate admissions criteria.
- Only 3000 and 4000-level courses that meet face to face are eligible to be contracted.
- Independent study or research hours may only be contracted in certain circumstances.
- Students may contract for courses taught by tenured and tenure-line faculty only.
- A student may enter into no more than 4 honors contracts and no more than 2 each long semester.
- Contracts must define how the supplemental activities will meet the required outcomes of honors courses.

- Contracts must involve scheduled contact between students and faculty member in a significant mentoring relationship.
- The Honors Program provides the template of the contract and has final authority to approve contracts, determine Honors standards, and grant Honors credit.
- Outcomes must be assessable and generate products that will be kept on file in the Honors office. Send an electronic copy of the final product to the director by the last day of the semester/session.
- The student will create and present a brief overview of their research/findings/experience at the semesterly Honors Symposium. The sponsoring faculty member is strongly encouraged to attend in order to determine if the student fully grasped the material and is able to communicate it to others. Details will be provided by the Director.

Course Grade

The student must fulfill all regular course assignments as well as complete the Honors elements specified in the contract. The grade will be based on both these regular course assignments and the honors assignments according to a grading formula the professor specifies. Thus, the contract is for Honors designation in the course and in no way relieves you of regular course responsibilities. Note that a final grade of 'B' or better is required for the course to count for honors credit.

It is recommended that the student be required to obtain a certain grade on the Honors assignment(s) in order to obtain Honors credit. If the student meets or exceeds that grade, the student gets Honors credit. Using this method, a different grading scale for the student would not be required.

Upon completion of the contract and general course requirements, *the professor* will submit the student's grade as an XH, where X represents the grade the student received in the course. The H will ensure that the student receives Honors credit for the course.

To the Honors Student

You have the responsibility of initiating the Honors contract option by expressing your interest to the director, making an application to a professor, and developing a course of study for the contract. Your goals will be:

- *To learn the course material at a more sophisticated level;*
- *To explore innovative and nontraditional approaches in the field of study;*
- *To establish a professional relationship with a tenure-track or tenured faculty member; and*
- *To develop a professional interest leading to your senior Project of Excellence.*

Once you and your professor sign the contract, you are expected to honor this agreement. Failure to accomplish the contract obligations does not affect your status in the regularly scheduled course or the grade earned in the course. If you find it necessary to rescind your contract, you must notify and explain to the professor and the Director your reasons in writing.

To the Professor

Contracts bring additional responsibilities to the instructor. No member of the faculty is obligated to enter into an Honors contract and, therefore, you may refuse a student's request to develop a contract. If you agree to direct a contract, you are expected to honor this agreement. You have a right, and perhaps an obligation, to limit the number of contracts to which you agree. Limitations on the number undertaken will enable you to serve each student in the best possible way. If the student fails to meet his or her agreed-upon obligations or does not perform at the appropriate academic level, you may rescind the contract at any time after informing the students and the Honors director in writing.

Honors contracts share some of the characteristics of guided independent study, except that contract elements should relate closely to the subject matter, concepts, and methods of the course in which they are undertaken. After the beginning of the term, reasonable modifications in the contracts can be made by mutual agreement of the student and the instructor. Modifications need to be communicated to the director, preferably via email.

Contract elements may include

- Additional readings chosen to enhance and deepen the student's understanding of regular course material;
- Guided research involving specialized library resources, field projects, or laboratory work resulting in a substantial end product for the student;
- Additional written work designed to encourage the development of critical skills and independent thinking.
- This work will be kept on file in the Honors Program office.

Contracting Guidelines

Those faculty wishing to offer Honors-by-contract must be sure that the following elements are taken into account when writing a contract.

1. What distinguishes Honors work from that done in regular coursework is enrichment. The student attempting Honors credit should gain a more profound appreciation of the subject, greater breadth and depth of knowledge, than is typical in the regular classroom. Honors contracts should not simply mark course acceleration; neither should they require only more of the same kind of work for the student.
2. An important component of enrichment is critical thinking. The students' learning outcomes should demonstrate that they have had to analyze a problem and synthesize a conclusion. It is also expected that there be some quantifiable learning outcomes as a result of the Honors experience, and that those outcomes will be as varied as the students themselves and reflect their personal interests.
3. The most important way of fostering enrichment is the mentor relationship between the students and the faculty member. Mentors contribute to the spirit of inquiry into a given subject, idea, or philosophy and promote extensive student contributions to class sections.
4. Student enrichment is made possible by sharing this learning outcome with others through oral presentation and written publication. This presentation / publication will take place at an Honors symposium held near the end of the semester. Honors symposia help students develop a sense of community with other Honors students and create a conference-like setting wherein research and new knowledge is shared with a wider circle of scholars.
5. Honors students should be clear regarding what they must accomplish in order to earn Honors credit and how they will be evaluated in relation to the other students in the class. This information should be in writing and should be signed by both the mentor and the student as part of the contract.
6. The faculty member should provide mid-semester and end-of-semester evaluation of the student's progress in completing components of the Honors contract. The Director will solicit feedback mid-semester from both the professor and student to see how the contract is progressing. It is expected that the student and professor will be proactive in addressing any issues related to the completion of the project.

The Honors Contract

The contract will detail what activities, research, assignments, or extra-curricular activities the student must fulfill in order to earn Honors credit for the course. Of special importance will be:

- Enriching assignments that advance critical / analytic skills and involve a research component that results in a final written product;
- Final oral presentation and publication of results;
- A clearly-defined mentor relationship including specific times / occasions for conferences throughout the semester; and
- Assessable outcomes.
- A copy of the course syllabus must accompany the contract.

The student must complete all assignments as detailed in the course information sheet, attend class in a responsible way, and participate in class discussions so that he or she is a role model for others enrolled in that section.

Role of the Honors Council

Once the contract is received by the Director, a copy will be forwarded to the Headmaster and Honors Council Curriculum Committee for review. The proposal will be reviewed to ensure consistent quality and rigor among all Honors contracts and classes. Approval is not automatic or immediate and may take up to two weeks. Once the contract application is reviewed, the student and professor will be notified of its standing. It is possible that the Honors Council will request that the proposal be revised and resubmitted.

Section 7 - Honors Curriculum

Course Offerings

The following table shows the frequency and order of Honors core courses and upper-division courses.

Fall

UCCP 1101.H01 Honors Freshman Seminar
 HONR 2101 Honors Senior Seminar
 HONR 3101 Junior Seminar
 HONR 4101 Senior Seminar
 PHIL 3340 Professional Ethics
 COMM 1315 Public Speaking
 ENGL 3361 Honors Strategies and Genres of Advanced Writing

Spring

UCCP 1102.H01 Honors Freshman Seminar
 HONR 2102 Honors Senior Seminar
 HONR 3102 Junior Seminar
 HONR 4102 Senior Seminar
 ECON 2302 Microeconomics
 HONR 3491 Science & Technology for Decision Makers
 PHIL 2303.H01 Introduction to Logic
 ENGL 3363.H01 Honors History or Rhetoric

Additional Courses

Additional Honors courses may be offered at any time as well. Notice of courses will be posted on the Honors website and over the Honors listerv.

Catalog Descriptions

ENGL 3363.H0n: Honors Rhetoric

3 sem. hrs.

A study of the historical and theoretical development of rhetoric within the works of principal thinkers in the classical period, the Enlightenment, and the contemporary period. The analysis of rhetorical concepts in their relation to civic, cultural, political, and pedagogical developments and the construction of knowledge.

COMM 1315.H0n: Honors Public Speaking

3 sem. hrs.

A study of the art of public speaking and the tools employed by the speaker to build his/her craft. Basic public speaking techniques and terminology will be emphasized. Satisfies the oral communication component of the University core curriculum.

ENGL 3361.H0n: Honors Strategies and Genres of Advanced Writing

3 sem. hrs.

Practice in techniques and tactics of the sophisticated writer. Focus on rhetorical strategies that succeed in specific discourse situations, both academic and non-academic.

PHIL 2303.H0n: Honors Introduction to Logic

3 sem. hrs.

Basic principles and techniques used in understanding, constructing, and evaluating arguments. Topics covered may include formal methods of analyzing arguments, informal fallacies, scientific reasoning, and moral arguments.

PHIL 3340.H0n: Honors Professional Ethics

3 sem. hrs.

A rigorous and comprehensive study of theoretical and applied ethics with an emphasis on the application of ethical theory to clarify, explain, and resolve real-world ethical dilemmas. Satisfies the philosophy component of the University core curriculum.

ECON 2302.H0n: Honors Microeconomics Principles

3 sem. hrs.

Demand and supply, consumer behavior, elasticity, production costs, competitive and non-competitive market structures and models of the modern market price system are analyzed. Emphasis on use of marginal analysis to determine prices, output, income and economic welfare in a market price system. Satisfies the economics component of the University core curriculum.

HONR 3491: Science and Technology for Decision Makers

4 sem. hrs.

An honors science course team-taught by a mathematician, a physicist, a chemist, and a biologist on the relevance and interdisciplinary nature of science, the formal tools and techniques of critically evaluating scientific research, and the use of qualitative and quantitative data in the application of science and technology.

UCCP 1101.H0n & 1102.H0n: Freshman Seminar

1 sem. hr. x 2 sem.

A seminar covering basic study skills, time-management skills, self-discipline issues, course problems as they arise, and discussions on integrative essays and books. Replaces the first year seminar component of the University core curriculum.

HONR 2101 & 2102: Sophomore Seminar

1 sem. hr. x 2 sem.

A seminar devoted to reading and discussing important works in various fields which are combined, pending funding, with field-trips to lectures, presentations, museums, and demonstrations.

HONR 3101 & 3102: Junior Seminar

1 sem. hr. x 2 sem.

A seminar built on refining skills in analysis and developing research topics for the Project of Excellence, with a special emphasis the second semester on application for graduate and professional school as appropriate.

HONR 4101 & 4102: Senior Seminar

1 sem. hr. x 2 sem.

A seminar devoted to the balanced execution of projects of excellence, including peer draft review, group study sessions, mock presentations, and research analysis as appropriate.

HONR 3340 - Academic and Field Research

3 sem. hrs.

An examination of the assumptions and questions underlying research methods across disciplines, with special emphasis on how methodologies from different fields (such as science and humanities) can complement each other. The course will involve experts from across the university who will address issues such as 1) the distinct qualities of quantitative and qualitative research, 2) current uses of surveys, interviews, and market research, 3) the construction of new knowledge in various disciplines, from problem to publication, 4) the critical use and evaluation of electronic and print resources, archival materials, government documents, and scholarly list serves. Students will be expected to prepare a review of literature focusing on an issue or problem in their field of study.

HONR 3390 - Topics in the Humanities

3 sem. hrs.

Significant contemporary issues in arts, humanities, and education. Subject matter rotates and is determined by the honors director and the Honors Council through competitive submission from university faculty based on the course's interdisciplinary design. May be repeated when topics vary.

HONR 3490 - Topics in the Sciences

1-4 sem. hrs.

Significant contemporary issues in the disciplines of sciences, health sciences, social sciences, and business. Subject matter rotates and is determined by the honors director and the Honors Council through competitive submission from university faculty based on the course's interdisciplinary design. May be repeated when topics vary.

HONR 4390 - Seminar in the Humanities

3 sem. hrs.

Study of specialized topics and themes in arts, humanities, and education. May be repeated when topics vary.

HONR 4396 - Honors Directed Independent Study

1-3 sem. hrs.

Individual supervised study / research. Requires a formal proposal of study to be completed in advance of registration to be approved by a supervising faculty member and the Honors Council, and result in a written product submitted to the faculty member and Honors Program office. For students with junior standing or above. Only 3 semester hours of Honors independent study credit may be counted toward the Honors graduation requirement.

HONR 4397 - Honors Internship

1-3 sem. hrs.

Practical experience in the student's major field. Activity must be connected to an academic research question and a body of knowledge that addresses some aspect of the activity to be undertaken. At the close of the internship, a written report and self-assessment must be submitted to a supervising faculty member and the Honors Program office. Offered by pre-approved application to the Honors Council. For students with junior standing or above. Only 3 semester hours of Honors internship or applied experience credit may be counted toward the Honors graduation requirement.

HONR 4398 - Honors Applied Experience

1-3 sem. hrs.

Practical experience connected to the student's field of study, usually with a service or leadership component. Activity must be connected to an academic research question and a body of knowledge that addresses some aspect of the activity to be undertaken, and result in a written product submitted to a supervising faculty member and the Honors Program office. Offered by pre-approved application to the Honors Council and graded "credit" or "no credit." Applied experience courses will include no less than 45 hours (for one credit) and no more than 135 hours of work experience (for three credits). For students with junior standing or above. Only 3 semester hours of Honors applied experience credit may be counted toward the Honors graduation requirement.

HONR 4490 - Seminar in the Sciences

1-4 sem. hrs.

Study of specialized topics and themes in the sciences, health sciences, social sciences, and business. May be repeated when topics vary.

Content and Grading in Honors Courses

Because the Honors Program Curriculum emphasizes active engagement and higher-order thinking skills, courses designated as "honors" do not require "more" work, but rather material handled in a different way. The emphasis is on challenging the student to reach his/her intellectual potential, and methods of evaluating student performance adjust accordingly. Here are some examples. Rather than requiring students to memorize materials for a test, students are asked to write essays considering a problem and potential solutions, or to approach an issue by articulating multiple perspectives. Rather than reading textbooks about basic sociological principles, students engage in sociological practice, then move from the practical to the general in order to define principles they have employed. Rather than being told what philosophers say about Aristotle, students read Aristotle for themselves.

Honors Program Outcomes

The Honors Program seeks to instill habits or “dispositions”	Emphasizes Critical Analysis	Research Intensive	Writing Intensive
Remembering		<p>Can relate primary paradigms from the field(s) being studied.</p> <p>Can employ a working vocabulary from the field(s) being studied.</p>	
Understanding		<p>Can read / digest research results from disciplines being studied.</p> <p>Can read/ digest paradigms from primary sources in the field(s) being studied.</p>	<p>Can use pre-writing and drafting skills to generate ideas and insights into course readings / issues.</p> <p>Can rephrase major issues / questions in assigned readings / labs.</p> <p>Can employ documentation conventions for the discipline in which they are working.</p>
Applying	<p>Can model research and writing methods specific to fields being studied.</p> <p>Can apply lessons from the past to current problems / future needs.</p>	<p>Can apply appropriate research methods to a given problem.</p> <p>Can conduct primary research.</p> <p>Can conduct secondary scholarly research.</p> <p>Can construct a means of tracking primary and secondary research on a long-term basis.</p>	<p>Can maximize the benefits of writing-as process in connection with own learning style and strengths.</p> <p>Can reflect on major concepts & paradigms.</p> <p>Can adapt writing models and styles for specific purposes / audiences.</p> <p>Can employ varied means of description (visuals, graphics) to inform readers.</p>
Analyzing	<p>Can reason from specific to general principles.</p>	<p>Can examine paradigms in a given field in different contexts.</p> <p>Can distinguish between differing data sets /</p>	<p>Can weigh problems, conflicts, case studies in journaling or drafting process.</p> <p>Can work toward a thesis</p>

		research results and their contexts.	through revision. Can support a thesis with valid reasoning and data. Can intelligently weigh conflicting perspectives.
Evaluating	<p>Can foresee consequences of a position.</p> <p>Can synthesize material within disciplines.</p> <p>Can synthesize material across disciplines.</p> <p>Can recognize and assess the social consequences of knowledge.</p>	<p>Can interpret research results from primary and secondary data.</p> <p>Can weigh differing interpretations of primary data.</p> <p>Can judge relative merits of paradigms in a given field.</p> <p>Can articulate personal values and assumptions that underlie conclusions.</p>	<p>Can connect methods, ideas, and data from one discipline to another.</p> <p>Can offer detailed / helpful review of fellow students' writing.</p> <p>Can project the consequences of a thesis or claim.</p>
Creating	<p>Can reason from / accommodate perspectives other than their own.</p> <p>Can apply abstract principles to concrete problems.</p>	<p>Can formulate solutions to problems / issues researched.</p> <p>Can communicate those solutions to interested parties.</p> <p>Can propose bridges between conflicting views, interpretations, and paradigms.</p>	<p>Can envision and articulate solution(s) to problems and issues.</p> <p>Can lead a reader through possible ways of implementing those Solutions.</p>