

HONORS COLLEGE

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Mission of the Honors College

The mission of the Youngstown State University Honors College is to provide academically talented students of any discipline with a community of excellence to develop their full intellectual and cultural potential. Through a combination of extraordinary learning experiences in small classes and experiential seminars, living-learning communities, unique and flexible resources for commuter students, leadership and innovative engagement activities, service-learning and traditional volunteer initiatives, interdisciplinary projects, research opportunities, and community, regional, and global perspectives, we fulfill this mission. As a direct outgrowth and articulated in the YSU Mission Statement, the Honors College "places students at our center" of an energized and inclusive community of faculty, staff, and alumni who share in the pursuit of life-long excellence in learning and civic engagement.

Outcomes

ENRICHMENT

Eligible students who desire an enriched education may take honors courses and thus participate in the "honors experience" by applying to the Honors College.

HONORS DIPLOMA

Students may apply to the Honors College, pursuing excellence in a broad range of subjects. Successful completion of this guided course of study will be acknowledged with a special designation on the commencement program, diploma, and final transcript.

Benefits of Joining

- Students enjoy the benefits of early registration each semester they are actively participating.
- Honors students are eligible to live in the Honors College's living and learning center, Cafaro House Residence Hall, or The Courtyards Apartments - Building #2.
- Course material is covered in much greater depth than in a traditional class. Therefore, Honors students receive a "value-added" education;
- Members may use the computer facilities in Fok Hall, which includes wireless connectivity, study space, and a student lounge.
- As reflected by the transcript and diploma, an Honors student has shown the desire and ability to go above and beyond what is traditionally required by the University. This is particularly impressive to graduate and professional schools and potential employers.
- High-achieving students benefit from the experience of taking classes and learning with some of the most academically talented students in the nation.

Administration of the Honors College

The program is operated by the Honors Director under the jurisdiction of the Honors Committee of the University Senate. The Honors Director reports to the Special Assistant to the President.

Baccalaureate Honors

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students qualify with a 3.5 overall grade point average and at least a composite ACT score of 26, or combined SAT score of 1260 on the new SAT (or 1760 on the old SAT).

2. Current YSU students must have completed at least 12 semester hours of college-level study (not to include remedial courses) with a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.4.
3. Transfer students must have completed at least 15 semester hours of college-level study accepted for credit at YSU (not to include remedial courses) with a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.4.
4. Students enrolled in or eligible to enter the Honors College and others approved by the instructor and director of Honors may take honors courses.
5. To remain in good standing in the Honors College, students must maintain a GPA of at least a 3.4. Students falling below this level for two consecutive semesters will be dropped from the program.
6. Students who complete no honors work for two consecutive semesters will be suspended from the program. Satisfactory progress must be made in order to fulfill all applicable honors college scholarships.
7. Completing the honors requirements necessitates an average of three to six hours of honors work per semester for the first six semesters, unless the student will graduate in less than four years. If graduating in less than four years, the student should work with the Honors Director to map out a plan for completion. All honors coursework, except for the senior honors thesis or capstone, should be completed before the senior year.

Baccalaureate Honors Curriculum

(for students who enroll beginning Summer semester 2015)

Students who enter into the Honors College beginning summer semester 2015 are required to complete at least 25 semester hours of honors work, including a senior thesis or capstone.

Further requirements include the following:

- *First Year Honors Seminar (Intro to Honors)* – 1 credit (to be taken in either the first or second semester)
- *General Education Requirements* – 9 credits (GER's should be taken as actual honors courses and not contracted)
- *Other* – 12+ credits (Combination of seminars, upper division courses, or general education requirements)
- *Senior Honors Capstone*¹ 1-3 credits

¹ During the senior year, a capstone thesis/project in the major department is required. This is generally worth 1-3 semester hours depending upon the department. A faculty advisor, selected by the student and approved by the Director of Honors, will oversee this project. The completed capstone in the form of a thesis should be bound and archived by the Library and stored in the Honors College, Fok Hall. Certain projects other than theses may be presented in poster form or technologically recorded and similarly archived and stored. A public defense is required and may be in the form of an exhibition, recital, formal presentation at a regional/national conference or Quest. Projects completed by individuals, teams, and teams of students working with community officials are all appropriate.

Associate Honors

The pre-college requirements for the Honors Associate track are identical to those of the four-year Honors Program. Students who have not completed the college preparatory subjects are admitted to the Honors Associate Program on the condition that their course of study includes at least one course prescribed for correcting a deficiency each semester until the deficiencies have been erased. Courses taken at the college level and used to make up a deficiency will be applied toward the Honors Associate Program.

The following students qualify, upon application for the Honors Associate track:

- Students with a 3.5 overall grade point average and a Composite ACT score of 26 or a combined SAT of 1260 (new) 1760 (old).

- Current YSU students having completed at least 12 semester hours of college-level study (not to include remedial courses) with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.4.
- Students having completed at least 15 semester hours of college-level study accepted for credit at YSU (not to include remedial courses) with a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.4.

Honors Associate Curriculum

- *First Year Honors Seminar* – 1 credit (To be taken in either the first or second semester.)
- *General Education Requirements* – 6 credits (GER's should be taken as actual honors courses and not contracted.)
- *Other* – 3+ credits (Combination of seminars, upper division courses, or general education requirements.)
- *Honors Capstone* – 1-3 Credits

Individualized Honors Curriculum (IHC)

An individualized honors curriculum (IHC) is available for high-achieving students who wish to alter any of the requirements listed above for either the associate or baccalaureate Honors Programs. The IHC may be necessary for first-year students entering with more than a year of college credits from College Credit Plus, Advanced Placement and other transfer credits. However, the student should prepare a full proposal that includes:

- application for IHC (available from the Honors Office)
- reasons for choosing not to follow the prescribed honors program
- goals of the IHC
- exact courses and the course format (i.e. honors class, contract honors, independent study, study abroad, etc.)
- outcomes of the IHC
- estimated time to completion

Course Credit Generation

Honors credit generation includes:

- special sections of traditional courses
- seminars on special topics
- contract honors as necessary
- advanced course work in areas outside of the major
- a common theme when possible
- a capstone project or thesis in the senior year

Transfer of Honors Credit

- Honors credit from other institutions will be accepted as honors credit and can be used to partially fulfill the requirements for the Honors Program at Youngstown State University provided that the honors credit was earned in a college-level course with a grade of B or higher.
- Upon application, all students from other honors programs who were in good standing relative to their previous program will be admitted into the YSU Honors Program. Honors credit earned at other institutions will be accepted as honors credit and can be used to partially fulfill the requirements for honors at YSU subject to review by the Honors Program Director.
- To graduate with an Honors diploma, a student must complete at least 13 of the total 25 semester hours of honors course work from YSU, fulfill the depth and breadth requirements of the Honors program, and complete a senior thesis or capstone in the major discipline. For more details, consult with the Honors Director.
- Students who transfer into the YSU Honors Program have all the rights and privileges granted to its members, e.g., honors housing, priority registration, use of honors facilities, etc.

Courses of Instruction

THE NATURE OF AN HONORS COURSE

When compared to a non-honors course, an honors course should:

- Cover material in greater depth
- Encompass more complex concepts, stressing analysis
- Place greater emphasis on communication skills
- Include discussion of applicable theories in the field
- Require of the students more preparation and class participation, including more ambitious papers or projects, as well as a greater share of responsibility for learning
- Involve more state-of-the-art technology whenever possible and appropriate

HONORS COLLEGE COURSES

HONR 1500 Intro to Honors 1 s.h.

Prepares students for the expectations and requirements of the Honors Program. Students develop skills that aid in their overall academic endeavors and explore topics pertinent to their development within the Honors Program and as citizens of the university, local, national and global communities.

Prereq.: Admission to the University Honors Program or eligibility for admission to the University Honors Program.

HONR 1599 Special Topics 3 s.h.

An introductory-level examination of some topic appropriate for honors study. Typically team-designed. In certain cases, students may arrange to have the course counted toward the major by negotiation with the major department. With approval of the director of Honors, may be repeated for credit with different topics.

Prereq.: Admission to the Honors Program or permission of instructor and director of Honors.

HONR 2601 Honor Seminar 1-2 s.h.

An interdisciplinary seminar series dealing with topics appropriate to students in the Honors Program. The subjects include, but are not limited to, creativity, the organization and function of the university, the total human being, critical thinking, current events, etc.

Prereq.: Eligibility for the Honors Program.

HONR 2602 Honor Seminar 1-2 s.h.

An interdisciplinary seminar series dealing with topics appropriate to students in the Honors Program. The subjects include, but are not limited to, creativity, the organization and function of the university, the total human being, critical thinking, current events, etc.

Prereq.: Eligibility for the Honors Program.

HONR 2699 Special Topics 3 s.h.

A close examination of some topic appropriate for lower-division honors study. Typically team-designed. In certain cases, students may arrange to have the course counted toward the major by negotiation with the major department. With approval of the director of Honors, may be repeated for credit with different topics.

Prereq.: Admission to the Honors Program or permission of instructor and director of Honors.

HONR 3701 University Honors Seminar 1-2 s.h.

A critical investigation of selected areas underlying civilization, embracing and integrating the particular studies of science, society, and the humanities.

Prereq.: Eligibility for the Honors Program.

HONR 3702 University Honors Seminar 1-2 s.h.

A critical investigation of selected areas underlying civilization, embracing and integrating the particular studies of science, society, and the humanities.

Prereq.: Eligibility for the Honors Program.

HONR 3799 Special Topics 3 s.h.

A close examination of some topic appropriate for upper-division honors study. Typically team-designed. In certain cases, students may arrange to have the course counted toward the major by negotiation with the major department. With approval of the director of Honors, may be repeated for credit with different topics.

Prereq.: Admission to the Honors Program or permission of instructor and director of Honors.

HONR 3799Y Special Topics Revitalizing Youngstown 3 s.h.

A close examination of some topic appropriate for upper-division honors study. Typically team-designed. In certain cases, students may arrange to have the course counted toward the major by negotiation with the major department. With approval of the director of Honors, may be repeated for credit with different topics.

Prereq.: Admission to the Honors Program or permission of instructor and director of Honors.

HONR 4890 Senior Honors Thesis 1-3 s.h.

Directed research for students pursuing senior honors thesis research. May be repeated for up to 3 s.h.

Prereq.: Junior status; completion of 18 s.h. of Honors coursework; submission of an approved Honors thesis proposal; and permission of the honors director.

Contract Honors Courses

Any course other than those which are offered as an honors course (ENGL 1550H Honors Writing 1, MATH 1585H Accelerated Honors Calculus 1, etc.), remedial, or high school remedial courses may be taken for honors credit with the concurrence of the faculty teaching the class and the approval of the Honors Program Director.

The contract honors option does not involve more credit hours for a course, but rather credit of a different kind. Proposals should involve not simply more work on the part of the student, but rather work in greater depth. Proposals are initiated by the student after consulting with the instructor, then carefully reviewed by the department chair. Chairs certify that by the standards of the discipline, proposals meet the criteria listed. Contract Honors Proposals are generated online through the Honors Student Dashboard with approval of proposals completed electronically. More information and instructions for using the Dashboard can be obtained by contact the Honors College.

Remedial courses are not suitable for contract honors. Contracts are not normally approved when an honors section exists for the same course (e.g. ENGL 1551H Honors Writing 2). Projects in the historiography of any discipline are acceptable. Contract proposals must be submitted by the published due date.

Completion status is reported by faculty to the Honors Director via the online *Honors Contract Completion Tracking System*. Instructions for accessing the system are sent to faculty via email by the week before finals week.

University Honors Program Engagement Requirements

VOLUNTEERISM AND SERVICE-LEARNING

Honors students are required to complete 60 hours of volunteerism on an annual basis. Twenty hours may be accumulated in the summer with the approval of the Honors Director. Reporting of volunteerism is required at the conclusion of each activity. Students are required to engage in at least two Honors College sponsored volunteer events of their choice. All Honors students are required to participate in the annual Global Day of Service held at the beginning of fall semester.

ENGAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP/CO-CURRICULARS

Students who connect to the university through active participation demonstrate higher satisfaction and retention. Honor students are required to engage in student life.

Student Organizations

All Honors Students are members of the Honors Trustees. The Trustees is an official student organization at YSU. The group receives funding from YSU to sponsor events and volunteer projects that are available to the University community at large. Rotaract is also an organization available to students ages 18-30 with the focus on the development of young adults in their communities through service and leadership. Other organizations include the Poverty Awareness in Youngstown group, MALAINA, and Women in Honors.

National Fellowships and Scholarships

The Honors College leads the National Scholarship Committee composed of faculty and staff from across the campus to advertise scholarship opportunities and prepare students for prestigious competitions such as the Truman, Marshall, Goldwater, and Rhodes Scholarships. Information and applications for these scholarships are maintained by the Honors College Office.

STUDY ABROAD/GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Honors students are encouraged to participate in study abroad experiences. The Honors College staff will assist students with letters of recommendation for participation and potential scholarship opportunities. Opportunities for Global Citizenship will be available for students and may take the form of Volunteerism or Leadership opportunities when a formal study abroad experience is not possible.

LIVING-LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS (OPTIONAL)

Both residential and commuter students can enjoy the community that exists within honors. Two on-campus honors residential learning communities--Cafaro House and Building #2 of the Courtyards are available. Cafaro House is equipped with a computer lab and academic wing. The accommodations are 4-, 8-, and 18-person suites with two students per room. The Courtyards offer either 4-person, 2-person, or single apartments. No matter the apartment type, each student has his/her own bedroom. Fok Hall now serves as the home for the Honors College staff and is situated half-way between both residential communities and within convenient walking distance from the six academic colleges. Available in Fok Hall is a student lounge, conference room, study space, meeting rooms, relaxation room, and the Penguin Pantry--all of which provide space for community building and learning. Commuter and residential students enjoy the home-like atmosphere within Fok Hall to foster learning and collaboration.

DOCUMENTATION OF ANNUAL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENT COMPLETION

Honors students are required to complete documentation of all requirements for the annual end of the year review. The review will determine scholarship renewals and progress in the program to meet annual student learning outcomes for the five pillars: Leadership/Engagement, Interdisciplinary Perspectives, Volunteerism/Service Learning, Research and Scholarship, and Global Citizenship.

Students are required to maintain records and report all service conducted outside of the university, student work demonstrating mastery of student learning outcomes, and other scholarly and academic work of added value to retain in the online portfolio.

DOCUMENTARY RECOGNITION OF SUCCESS IN THE HONORS COLLEGE

GRADE RECORDS

A student's permanent record will be the sole official record of his or her honors courses and seminars, each of which will be designated with an "H" after the catalog number, or in some cases, with a note detailing that honors credit was earned for that particular course.

COMPLETION OF THE HONORS COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS

Upon satisfactory completion of Honors requirements, the Honors Director will initiate having the appropriate distinction entered on the student's record and diploma.