

VIII. HONORS PROGRAM

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Overview

The Honors Program exemplifies Messiah University's commitment to academic excellence and fostering an intellectually rigorous Christian world view, with the goal of equipping young men and women for lives of leadership and service.

The Honors Program is designed for students who demonstrate high scholarly ability early in their academic career. The curriculum is comprised of general education honors courses and a Senior Honors Capstone. In addition to the credit-bearing curriculum, students meet regularly at events outside of the classroom to discuss timely issues and interact with special campus guests. Throughout the academic year students also have opportunities to participate in on- and off-campus academic and cultural activities. Upon graduation students receive special recognition at commencement, and on their transcript and diploma.

Students from all of the university's applied and liberal arts majors are eligible to participate. Moreover, in keeping with the university's commitment to educating the whole person, students in the Honors Program are encouraged to participate in the university's many co-curricular opportunities.

Application Process

The Honors Program is open to first-year students. Minimum qualifications generally include a minimum score of 1360 on the SAT, 29 on the ACT, or 91 on the CLT as well as a high school GPA of 3.9 or above. No special application is required. As part of the regular admission process, students who meet the minimum eligibility requirements are evaluated for the program. From the eligible pool of candidates, students are selected to attend a Scholarship Day, and learn about the Honors Program, interview with a faculty member, and write a short essay. Afterward, the interview, short essay, and other application materials will be evaluated, and offers extended to approximately 100 students to enter the program in the fall. Students selected for the Honors Program receive either full- or partial-tuition scholarships.

On Campus

During Welcome Week, first-year students in the Honors Program and their family members participate in a welcome reception where they meet the other new students and learn more about the Honors Program. Throughout their time at Messiah University, academic advising is provided by faculty in the department of their chosen major. The Director of the Honors Program provides additional academic advising and information regarding requirements and activities associated with the Honors Program.

Curricular Requirements

1. **FIRST YEAR:**
Fall Semester: First-Year Seminar (IDFY 102H – HONORS section); and
Spring Semester: Created and Called for Community (IDCR 151H – HONORS section).
2. **SOPHOMORE or JUNIOR YEAR:**
One honors interdisciplinary QuEST course meeting either Ethics/Pluralism/World Views, Non-Western Studies; or Science Technology and the World.

A second interdisciplinary QuEST course from a different category, which does not need to be an honors section. Depending on the major, this second requirement may be waived. When waivers exist, if the major has one or two waivers for ID courses, the student must take their honors section from the non-waived category. If three ID waivers exist, the student has their choice of which area to take their honors section. Honors ID course credit requirements can only be met at the Mechanicsburg campus or through a Messiah University HONORS study-abroad course.

3. **JUNIOR or SENIOR YEAR: Senior Honors Capstone.** This requirement can be met by one of two ways:
- a. Senior Honors Project, which can be taken either within the student's department or within the Honors Program (HONR 498/499) for 4-6 credit hours. This is a two-semester project that can take a variety of forms. All projects must fulfill the parameters for the Senior Honors Project.
 - b. Senior Honors Seminar (HONR 497) for 3 credit hours. An interdisciplinary capstone seminar for students in the Honors Program. The thematic focus of each seminar will be defined by the professor and will include intensive reading, discussion, and a written research paper.

Parameters for Senior Honors Projects (option a above):

- Projects must be of graduate-level quality;
- Projects must reflect the methodological, theoretical, and substantive expectations for scholarship in the project area;
- Projects must be worked on over two consecutive semesters and total 4 to 6 credit hours;
- Projects may begin during the junior or senior year;
- Projects must be approved by the Director of the Honors Program and by a faculty supervisor during the semester preceding the start of the project;
- Projects must culminate with some type of public dissemination, such as a thesis defense, presentation, demonstration, or performance.

Note: Participants planning to graduate early may not begin their Senior Honors Project until they have completed two years in the Program.

Non-Credit Bearing Requirement: Honors Activities

Every semester, the Honors Program hosts and co-hosts many activities. These activities take many forms--lectures, panels, presentations, discussions, readings, plays, concerts, trips, and more--and appeal to a wide range of interests and majors. Each semester that students are enrolled on the Mechanicsburg campus, they must attend at least two events to fulfill this requirement of the program.

Book Of The Year Program

Students during their first year in the Honors Program together read a book over the course of the academic year that has been chosen by the program. The Book Of The Year changes from year to year, but all the books that are part of this program are essential books that have proven to be transformative for countless readers. The BOTY program offers an opportunity to explore fundamental questions along with a great circle of readers and discussants through the ages. Moreover, it contributes to the maturity of intellect, character, and Christian faith among participating students, and builds bonds among them as they read and converse together. After attending lectures and seminars on the BOTY, students write a paper on it in their Honors section of *Created and Called for Community*.

Eligibility Requirements for the Honors Program

Participation in the Honors Program requires that all participants meet the grade point average requirement for either the Trustees', President's or Faculty Scholarship. For President's and Faculty Scholarship recipients, renewal of these scholarships is contingent on maintaining a 3.2 GPA as a first year student and a 3.4 GPA each subsequent year. For Trustees' Scholarship recipients, renewal is contingent on maintaining a 3.3 GPA as a first year student and a 3.6 GPA each subsequent year. Participation in the Honors Program is also required for scholarship renewal. If a student is removed

from the Honors Program he or she cannot be readmitted. All Honors Program participants must meet the preceding GPA requirements upon completion of all course work in order to be certified, at the time of graduation, as a Honors Program graduate.