

VIII. HONORS PROGRAM

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Overview

The University Honors Program exemplifies Messiah College'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 program curriculum is comprised of general education honors courses and a Senior Honors Experience. In addition to the credit bearing curriculum, students meet each semester outside of the classroom in the Honors Congress 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 college transcript and diploma.

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

Application Process

The University Honors Program is open to first-year students. The minimum qualifications include a 1360 SAT score or 29 ACT score or 91 CLT score, and 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 for on-campus interviews. After the on-campus interview and evaluation of all other application materials, approximately 100 students are selected 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 participate in a Director's Reception where, among other things, they meet the other new students in the program. Throughout their time at Messiah University, academic advising is provided by faculty in the department of their chosen major. The Director of the University Honors Program provides additional academic advising and information regarding requirements and activities associated with the Honors Program.

Curricular Requirements

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

A second interdisciplinary Quest course from a different category, 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 HONORS J-term/May-term study abroad course.
3. **JUNIOR or SENIOR YEAR: Senior Honors Experience.** 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 CHP (HONR 498/499) for 4-6 credit hours. A two-semester project that can take a variety of forms, including an interdisciplinary thesis, creative arts project, or service learning project. 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 two semesters and total 4 to 6 credit hours;
- Projects may begin during junior or senior year;
- Projects must be approved by the Honors Director and 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 Congress

Offered each semester, the Honors Congress events will address selected topics and issues. The Congress will revolve around readings, discussion and presentations by college faculty and off-campus guests, as well as cultural events and field trips. CHP students must attend at least three Honors Congress activities in three different semesters. CHP students must complete the Honors Congress requirement in the fall of their first year.

Eligibility Requirements for the University 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.