

HONORS PROGRAM (HNRS)

The Western Honors Program provides enhanced and challenging academic programming to a carefully selected group of highly motivated and accomplished students from all disciplines. The Honors Program at Western provides the best of a liberal arts education by providing students with the opportunity to become autonomous learners within a highly supportive and collaborative academic community. Honors students are encouraged and challenged to free themselves from not only external constraints on the acquisition of knowledge and understanding but also from internal limitations that can prevent critical thinking, reflective analysis, and responsible choice. The Honors program welcomes a diversity of perspectives and fosters the intentional practice of civil discourse, enabling students to develop the capacity for informed analysis and responsible evaluation and a willingness to submit discoveries and conclusions to an academic community of their peers and mentors to be mutually investigated and critiqued. Small class size, extensive interaction among peers and professors, experiences outside the traditional classroom, and interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to education are all features of the program. Such opportunities allow students to explore avenues of intellectual inquiry within and beyond their selected majors and minors.

Program Benefits

Honors students have the opportunity to become a part of a scholarly community composed of faculty and students committed to the pursuit of intellectual inquiry, creativity, and academic excellence. Benefits of membership in the Western Honors Program also include automatic eligibility for Honors housing and Honors classes, use of the Honors Center, computer lab and classroom in Taylor Hall, participation in Honors Orientation and the opportunity to get involved with the Honors Student Advisory Board to plan social and intellectual activities beyond the classroom, Honors study abroad, priority registration, exclusive opportunity to apply yearly for Honors-exclusive scholarships, and special recognition at graduation upon completion of the program. Students may also register for Honors Special Topics classes or develop independent and special Honors projects which offer challenging and accelerated learning experiences inside and outside the regular course offerings.

Admission Requirements

Invitations to apply for the program are extended to high school students who have achieved a 3.50 cumulative grade point average or who have successfully completed International Baccalaureate programs. Students who do not meet either of these criteria but are interested in joining the program should contact the program director. Applicants to the program will be asked to submit a 250 word essay response to a question that will be included in the letter of invitation to apply. First or second-year Western students who have a minimum overall 3.3 grade point average may also apply. Upper-division students are considered on an individual basis. Transfer students with 29 or fewer credits are invited to apply to join Honors if they have achieved a minimum overall 3.3 college grade point average as well as fulfilled the high school GPA and test score requirements. Transfer students with 29 or more credits and a minimum overall 3.3 college grade point average are considered on an individual basis.

Program Requirements

Continuation in the program is based on maintaining an overall grade point average of 3.0. Graduation from the program requires a grade point average of 3.3 and completion of program requirements.

A minimum of 21 credits is required:

Code	Title	Credits
HNRS 100	The Gateway	3
HNRS 200	Honors Service Learning Seminar	2
HNRS 304	Honors Junior Seminar	1
HNRS 400	Honors Senior Seminar	1
Honors General Education courses ¹		6
Select eight credits of the following (at least six credits must be upper division):		8
HNRS 101	Honors Colloquium	
HNRS 197	Special Topics	
HNRS 201	Honors Colloquium	
HNRS 202	Service Learning in Honors	
HNRS 297	Special Topics	
HNRS 301	Honors Colloquium	
HNRS 302	Service Learning in Honors	
HNRS 303	Honors Field Experience	
HNRS 305	Place as Text	
HNRS 397	Special Topics	
HNRS 402	Service Learning in Honors	
HNRS 401	Honors Colloquium	
HNRS 403	Honors Field Experience	
HNRS 492	Independent Study	
HNRS 494	Thesis Preparation	
HNRS 495	Thesis	
HNRS 497	Special Topics	
Total Credits		21

¹ The six Honors General Education credits will be redistributed to Honors Electives for students who enter the Honors program with completed General Education programs either through Western or gtPathways.

Honors Courses

HNRS 100. The Gateway. (3 Credits)

Through the Gateway students are introduced to different ways of knowing thereby laying the foundation for the further development of a liberal arts education. Students enhance their capacity for informed analysis, responsible evaluation and effective argument construction leading to the ability to base actions and decisions upon the former. The students are encouraged to recognize value in varying epistemologies and engage in an active and intellectual exchange of ideas as part of an academic community formed via students and instructors co-investigation of various topics and disciplines. The course culminates with student-chosen and directed group presentations. Prerequisites: admission to the Honors Program and participation in the Honors Orientation program. Or instructor permission.

HNRS 101. Honors Colloquium. (1 Credit)

A complement to courses offered outside of the Honors program. Through formal arrangement between a course instructor and the Honors Program, the instructor and student develop an additional course project(s) to allow the Honors student enrolled in the class deeper engagement with the course material. Honors students who successfully complete both the Colloquium and the course to which it is linked receive Honors credit for both. May be taken more than once. Prerequisite: Completion of the Honors Colloquium project form in consultation with supervising faculty and the Honors Director. Or instructor permission.

HNRS 197. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)**HNRS 200. Honors Service Learning Seminar. (2 Credits)**

An application of the core values of the Honors Program including citizenship and community, experiential learning, interdisciplinary, risk taking and autonomy. Students together develop a research question and engage in active community service-based investigations to complement the exchange of ideas and research to address their question. Students determine an appropriate vehicle for a public presentation of their work and must demonstrate coherent understanding of the selected research question rather than presenting a collection of separate insights. Prerequisites: HNRS 100, and sophomore standing; or instructor permission.

HNRS 201. Honors Colloquium. (1 Credit)

A complement to courses offered outside of the Honors program. Through formal arrangement between a course instructor and the Honors Program, the instructor and student develop an additional course project(s) to allow the Honors student enrolled in the class deeper engagement with the course material. Honors students who successfully complete both the Colloquium and the course to which it is linked receive Honors credit for both. May be taken more than once. Prerequisite: Completion of the Honors Colloquium project form in consultation with supervising faculty and the Honors Director.

HNRS 202. Service Learning in Honors. (1-2 Credits)

Service Learning in Honors complements college course offerings by adding a hands-on service learning component with a community organization or community project. Through formal arrangement between an instructor and the Honors Program, the instructor meets with Honors students enrolled in the class to help provide specific disciplinary insights on issues affecting local communities, providing students with an opportunity to apply concepts, theories, and methods to practical real-world issues. Students gain familiarity with social problems and social responses, learn about communities as informed citizens, and gain expertise about the relationship between their roles as students and citizens. Honors students who complete both the Service Learning and the course to which it is linked receive Honors credit for both. Service Learning may be taken more than once. Prerequisite: Completion of the Honors Service Learning project form in consultation with supervising faculty and the Honors Director.

HNRS 297. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)**HNRS 301. Honors Colloquium. (1 Credit)**

A complement to courses offered outside of the Honors program. Through formal arrangement between a course instructor and the Honors Program, the instructor and student develop an additional course project(s) to allow the Honors student enrolled in the class deeper engagement with the course material. Honors students who successfully complete both the Colloquium and the course to which it is linked receive Honors credit for both. May be taken more than once. Prerequisite: Completion of the Honors Colloquium project form in consultation with supervising faculty and the Honors Director.

HNRS 302. Service Learning in Honors. (1-2 Credits)

Service Learning in Honors complements college course offerings by adding a hands-on service learning component with a community organization or community project. Through formal arrangement between an instructor and the Honors Program, the instructor meets with Honors students enrolled in the class to help provide specific disciplinary insights on issues affecting local communities, providing students with an opportunity to apply concepts, theories, and methods to practical real-world issues. Students gain familiarity with social problems and social responses, learn about communities as informed citizens, and gain expertise about the relationship between their roles as students and citizens. Honors students who complete both the Service Learning and the course to which it is linked receive Honors credit for both. Service Learning may be taken more than once. Prerequisite: Completion of the Honors Service Learning project form in consultation with supervising faculty and the Honors Director.

HNRS 303. Honors Field Experience. (1-2 Credits)

Honors students develop field experiences outside the classroom to complement courses without specified field experiences or to develop a more in-depth project for disciplinary-based field experiences. Through formal arrangement between the instructor and the Honors Program, the instructor meets with Honors students enrolled in the class to develop a specific field experience related to the course material. Honors students who successfully complete both the Field Experience and the course to which it is linked receive Honors credit for both. May be taken more than once. Prerequisite: Completion of the Honors Field Experience project form in consultation with supervising faculty and the Honors Director.

HNRS 304. Honors Junior Seminar. (1 Credit)

An introduction to the ongoing discussion of the timeless and universal ideas that are the foundation civilization. Students pursue the study of these ideas through guided reading of selections taken from the range of intellectual history. Prerequisites: HNRS 100, and junior standing, or instructor permission.

HNRS 305. Place as Text. (2-3 Credits)

Provides Honors students with opportunities to integrate experiences of theory and observation with place, time and self through a site-specific active learning experience. Students participate in a series of orientation sessions and complete associated assignments in preparation for a site visit. The class travels to a selected site and explores the concept of 'extending text' and mapping the site from a variety of multi and interdisciplinary perspectives. Modeled on the National Collegiate Honors Council City as Text program. Students may take this course twice for credit. Prerequisite: junior standing or instructor permission.

HNRS 397. Special Topics. (6 Credits)**HNRS 400. Honors Senior Seminar. (1 Credit)**

Honors students come together as autonomous learners in a supportive academic community to investigate a mutually decided upon theme or topic relating to a liberal arts education and constructive citizenship. Students are expected to illustrate a mastery of the goals promoted by the Honors Program and a liberal arts education including the rigorous application of analysis resulting in a coherent and integrated understanding of the selected theme or topic. Provides an opportunity to engage in larger philosophical inquiry and debate. Prerequisite: HNRS 200, HNRS 304 and senior standing or instructor permission.

HNRS 401. Honors Colloquium. (1 Credit)

A complement to courses offered outside of the Honors program. Through formal arrangement between a course instructor and the Honors Program, the instructor and student develop an additional course project(s) to allow the Honors student enrolled in the class deeper engagement with the course material. Honors students who successfully complete both the Colloquium and the course to which it is linked receive Honors credit for both. May be taken more than once. Prerequisite: Completion of the Honors Colloquium project form in consultation with supervising faculty and the Honors Director.

HNRS 402. Service Learning in Honors. (1-2 Credits)

Service Learning in Honors complements college course offerings by adding a hands-on service learning component with a community organization or community project. Through formal arrangement between an instructor and the Honors Program, the instructor meets with Honors students enrolled in the class to help provide specific disciplinary insights on issues affecting local communities, providing students with an opportunity to apply concepts, theories, and methods to practical real-world issues. Students gain familiarity with social problems and social responses, learn about communities as informed citizens, and gain expertise about the relationship between their roles as students and citizens. Honors students who complete both the Service Learning and the course to which it is linked receive Honors credit for both. Service Learning may be taken more than once. Prerequisite: Completion of the Honors Service Learning project form in consultation with supervising faculty and the Honors Director.

HNRS 403. Honors Field Experience. (1-2 Credits)

Honors students develop field experiences outside the classroom to complement courses without specified field experiences or to develop a more in-depth project for disciplinary based field experiences. Through formal arrangement between the instructor and the Honors Program, the instructor meets with Honors students enrolled in the class to develop a specific field experience related to the course material. Honors students who successfully complete both the Field Experience and the course to which it is linked receive Honors credit for both. May be taken more than once. Prerequisite: Completion of the Honors Field Experience project form in consultation with supervising faculty and the Honors Director.

HNRS 492. Independent Study. (1-6 Credits)

An opportunity for Honors students to undertake detailed study and/or research into a unique topic or issue stemming from the Honors Core curriculum under supervision of the Honors Director and appropriate regular faculty. May be taken for a maximum of three credits in one semester. Maximum credit toward Honors Program is three credits. Prerequisites: minimum junior standing and/or Honors Director approval.

HNRS 494. Thesis Preparation. (1 Credit)

An introduction to the process of developing a thesis project. Students undertake initial research on a potential thesis topic, develop a research plan and write a thesis proposal in preparation of writing an Honors thesis.

HNRS 495. Thesis. (2-3 Credits)

The student is required to complete a written thesis based on advanced study in a self-designed research project and present his/her findings to the Honors Council in a public forum. The project must be supervised by a faculty member from a field of study relevant to the student's thesis. Prerequisites: junior or senior standing; good standing in the Honors Program; and successful completion of at least nine hours in Honors, including HNRS 100. Or instructor permission.

HNRS 497. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)

Suggested 4-Year Degree Plan with the Honors Program

As each student's overall degree plan will vary, depending upon transfer credit and/or major, this is a suggested plan. Students transferring significant numbers of GE credits should meet with the Honors Program Director to make an individualized degree plan.

Students interested in the Western-CU Partnership Honors Program Certificate should consult individually with the Honors Program Director for degree plans.

Course	Title	Credits
Year One		
HNRS 100	The Gateway	3
Gen Ed	HNRS section of GE course	3
Credits		6
Year Two		
HNRS 200	Honors Service Learning Seminar	2
Gen Ed	HNRS section of GE course	3
HNRS	Special Topics elective course <small>Students are encouraged to consider taking an Honors Maymester Abroad course, as available, to earn 3 elective credits.</small>	3
Credits		8
Year Three		
HNRS 304	Honors Junior Seminar	1
HNRS	Special Topics elective course	3
Credits		4
Year Four		
HNRS 400	Honors Senior Seminar	1
HNRS	Special Topics elective course	2
Credits		3
Total Credits		21

This plan is intended primarily for students either in K-12/Secondary Licensure or 3+2 programs. As each student's overall degree plan will vary, depending upon transfer credit and/or major, this is a suggested plan. Students transferring significant numbers of GE credits should meet with the Honors Program Director to make an individualized degree plan.

Suggested 3-Year Degree Plan with the Honors Program

Course	Title	Credits
Year One		
HNRS 100	The Gateway	3
Gen Ed	HNRS section of GE course	3
Gen Ed	HNRS section of GE course	3
Credits		9
Year Two		
HNRS	Special Topics elective course and/or Honors colloquium added to a non-Honors course <small>Students are encouraged to consider taking an Honors Maymester Abroad course, as available, to earn 3 electives credits.</small>	3-4
Credits		3-4
Fall		
HNRS 200	Honors Service Learning Seminar	2
Credits		2
Spring		
HNRS 304	Honors Junior Seminar	1
Credits		1

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Year Three

HNRS 400	Honors Senior Seminar	1
HNRS	Special Topics elective course and/or Honors colloquium added to a non-Honors course	3-4
Credits		4-5
Total Credits		19-21