The Honors College Student Handbook - 2017

The Honors experience provides students with a unique and challenging set of opportunities, both in and out of the classroom. This handbook is designed to answer basic questions about Honors student responsibilities and privileges.

This handbook is reviewed every two years. Students are governed by the rules in effect in the year in which they entered the College. The College reserves the right to modify or edit information contained in this Handbook at any time during the academic year in response to unanticipated contingencies. All College students will be notified via TTU e-mail of any changes in Handbook content during the academic year. Students should refer to this handbook each semester before advising to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.

The Mission of the Texas Tech University Honors College
The Texas Tech University Honors College is dedicated to providing an enriched educational experience for highly motivated, intellectually capable, and curious students. This mission is accomplished through courses and activities designed to promote:

- critical thinking
- creativity
- scholarly investigation and research
- willingness to consider different perspectives
- civic engagement
- global awareness
- effective communication skills
- leadership
- integrity
The Vision of the Texas Tech University Honors College

The Honors College at Texas Tech University is the focal point for delivery of a liberal arts curriculum and provides key elements of a small college experience for students who also have access to the benefits of attending a large, research-intensive university.

Coincident with the Vision, the values to which we subscribe are:

Knowledge: Honors College students acquire a broad-based, liberal arts and global education to prepare themselves to take advantage of opportunities that exist beyond the university.

Service: Honors College students strive to be partners in community, regional, national and global conversations. Through study abroad programs and involvement in community-building activities, our students find their place prepared to make notable contributions to human welfare.

Integrity: Honors College students mature in an ethical environment where their positive actions serve as examples to others and as a call to action to adhere to noble principles.

Courage: Honors College students will develop the fortitude to take action in difficult conversations and situations even when they are in the minority or challenging accepted dogma.

The College expects that students will embrace the opportunity to explore the world in which they live, challenge themselves to develop their critical thinking skills, and go beyond the acquisition of vocational skills to foster a true educational experience containing breadth as well as depth. It is in this spirit that we seek to form a partnership with each of our students, in which College faculty and staff members provide entry to a world of opportunity. Honors students reciprocate by exploring, defining, and pursuing opportunity in a way that will maximize their academic and personal growth.

GRADUATION WITH HONORS DESIGNATIONS

Honors College students may earn one of two designations upon graduation from Texas Tech University: “with Honors from the Honors College” and, for those students successfully completing an Honors thesis, “with Highest Honors from the Honors College.”
Students must be in good standing with the College to graduate with either designation. Upon graduation from Texas Tech University, students who successfully complete all College requirements will receive the appropriate designation on the commencement program and transcript, and the notation “with Honors from the Honors College” or “with Highest Honors from the Honors College” on their baccalaureate diploma.

Upon graduation from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, students earning a baccalaureate degree who successfully complete all Honors College requirements will receive the appropriate designation on their Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center diploma and transcript. Students earning an entry-level Master’s degree who successfully complete all Honors College requirements will receive the designation on their transcript. The diplomas and transcripts of students earning other Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center graduate or professional degrees who successfully complete all Honors College requirements will not bear an Honors designation, but upon request they will be provided with a letter on College letterhead indicating the student completed the Honors College curriculum.

**With Honors from the Honors College**
To graduate with designation “with Honors from the Honors College,” students must achieve *an adjusted GPA of 3.50 or higher* in the semester of graduation, be in good standing with the College, and complete at least 24 semester credit hours of Honors credit including a three semester credit hour First Year Experience course with the one semester credit hour Learning Community Group; at least three semester credit hours of upper-level Honors seminar; and a three semester credit hour summit course (HONS 4302) for which they are eligible after they have completed 12 hours with the Honors College.

**With Highest Honors from the Honors College**
To graduate with the transcript designation “with Highest Honors from the Honors College,” students must complete an undergraduate thesis in addition to the requirements for graduating “with Honors from the Honors College.” These requirements are:

- Six semester credit hours of Honors research coursework (HONS 3300 and HONS 4300) in addition to the normal 24 semester credit hours required for graduation with Honors
- Successful completion of an Honors Thesis approved by their faculty advisor and the dean of the college.
- All Honors Arts and Letters (HAL) majors will successfully complete an undergraduate thesis (HONS 3300 and 4300) approved by the HAL director and the dean of the College.

**Honors Arts and Letters**
The Honors Arts and Letters (HAL) major is designed to educate students in the humanities while they accumulate core and track courses required for post-graduate work, especially in the health and legal professions, and graduate programs in general. The program requires foreign language up to the junior level, six hours of research and writing for the senior Honors thesis, and a minimum of fifteen hours of track classes in an area of the student’s choosing with approval by the HAL director.

**RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES, BENEFITS, OPPORTUNITIES**
Membership in good standing with the College confers the following rights and privileges:
- Smaller classes with special content
- Access to and interaction with College professors and administrators
- College faculty and advisors who can provide information and assist with advising and problem-solving
- Exposure to an interdisciplinary liberal arts approach to knowledge and learning
- Membership in the close-knit and vibrant community of Honors scholars, providing a support network of like-minded students
- Information about international education, travel, scholarships, and intellectual opportunities across the nation and around the world
- Support for applications to competitive and prestigious national and international scholarship programs including: Rhodes, Marshall, Fulbright, Truman, Goldwater, Udall, and others (for information on these kinds of opportunities contact the National and International Scholarships and Fellowships Office housed in the Honors College)
- Eligibility for paid undergraduate research opportunities through the Undergraduate Research Scholars Program
- Specially designated Honors campus housing, as space is available
- Special benefits at the University library, including extended borrowing privileges
- Use of the Student Forum at McClellan Hall, which includes a study area and computer lab
· Special programs and/or admission criteria at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine, School of Pharmacy, School of Health Professions, and the Texas Tech University School of Law
· Membership in an Honors College House
· Priority registration for classes to enable students to take advantage of academic opportunities, including Honors sections of selected courses
· Peer support through the First-Year Experience (FYE) Mentor Program, the Honors College Tutoring Corps, etc.
· Numerous leadership, service, and extracurricular involvement opportunities through College programs and organizations such as the Bayless Elementary Mentoring Program, Eta Omicron Nu, Honors Book Club, Honors Ambassadors, First-Year Experience Mentorship, and Honors House Captaincy; these opportunities are exclusive to Honors College students.

EXPECTATIONS OF HONORS STUDENTS
Our expectations of College students stem from our pillars:

KNOWLEDGE
INTEGRITY
SERVICE
COURAGE

If a student’s actions 1) negatively impact, or have the reasonable potential to negatively impact the College or its members, or 2) constitute a violation of the law or University policy in a way that relates to a right or privilege associated with enrollment in the College, the student may be subject to loss or restriction of Honors rights and privileges or be removed from the College. A student will have the opportunity to meet with a College advisor, with the possibility of appeal to the associate dean or dean before any action is taken.
HONORS ADVISING
Honors students are expected to meet with a College advisor prior to registration each semester with the exception of juniors and/or seniors who have received permission to waive advisement or who have successfully completed all Honors College requirements for graduation. This advisement is in addition to the advisement received from the department of the student’s major. Honors advising should generally occur after the student’s departmental advising. Honors advisement helps ensure that students are making progress toward completion of their Honors requirements, as well as helping to ensure they have access to the latest information about available courses and other opportunities.

HONORS PROBATION AND SUSPENSION
Any student put on Honors probation for lack of progress with Honors coursework must see a College advisor to discuss future progress. Such students must also complete an Honors seminar or junior/senior level Honors course in the upcoming semester and submit a program completion plan to an Honors advisor. Any student who does not comply with these requirements in the semester after probationary status begins will lose benefits associated with College membership, such as early registration privileges and College designated housing.

A student dropped from the College for failure to complete coursework requirements or for a GPA below the minimum for good standing in Honors may petition the associate dean to remain in the College. The associate dean will decide if circumstances warrant the student’s continuation in the College, and may impose specific conditions for the student’s continuation. Students who fail to adhere to the conditions set by the associate dean will be dropped from the College.

Conditions for probation and suspension:
- Students whose adjusted cumulative GPA falls below a 3.50 will be placed on Honors probation;
- Students on probation retain many of the rights and privileges associated with membership in the College, although they are not eligible to participate in programs or activities requiring them to be in good standing with the College and they are not eligible for student leadership positions in the College or for College research fellowships or Honors-awarded scholarships.
· Students on probation will be advised AFTER all students in good standing with the Honors College are advised regardless of their year and credit hours accumulated.

For students on College probation, if single-term GPA is above 3.250, they may remain in the College on probation, even if their adjusted cumulative GPA remains below 3.50.
· If a student’s single-term GPA falls below 3.250 in any semester after being placed on Honors probation, they will be dropped from the College.
· Any student whose grades fall below a 2.75 cumulative pure GPA will be dropped from the College immediately, without a probationary period.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SATISFACTORY PROGRESS IN HONORS COURSEWORK

Students entering the College as new or transfer students must:
· Complete the Honors College First-Year Experience (FYE) Program during their first fall semester, which includes a specially designed lower-level three or four semester credit hour Honors course and its corresponding one semester credit hour Learning Community Group (LCG);
· Complete three hours of Honors credit in the following spring semester;
· Continue to make steady progress toward the 24-credit requirement for graduation with an Honors College designation. The following checkpoints apply:
  · Complete at least 12 hours of Honors credit within four semesters with a B- or better;
  · Complete at least 18 hours of Honors credit within six semesters with a B- or better.

Any student failing to make steady progress in accordance with the above coursework requirements will be put on probationary status.

Any student who completes two consecutive semesters (exclusive of summer sessions) without taking an Honors course may be dropped from the College pursuant to situational review by an Honors advisor in consultation with the associate dean. Students are strongly encouraged to actively engage with the Honors College through coursework, activities, organizations, etc. in order to be competitive for Honors College scholarships.
Requests for exceptions should be discussed with an Honors advisor.

Transfer students or current Texas Tech students entering the College after their first semester at Texas Tech should discuss their requirements carefully with an Honors advisor.

**AWARD OF HONORS CREDIT**
Honors credit is only awarded for Honors coursework when a student earns a B- or better in an Honors-designated class. Students who do not receive Honors coursework credit for Honors classes in which they receive a grade of C or D may still be awarded general TTU credit as specified in the *Undergraduate Catalog*.

**PASS-FAIL CREDIT**
Students who participate in special sections of Law School courses offered under HONS 4301 may earn Honors credit on a pass/fail basis. If the law professor submits a “pass” to the Registrar on the final course roll, students will receive Honors credit.

**TRANSFER CREDIT**
Evidence of Honors credit at another post-secondary accredited institution as shown on an official transcript will be considered for Honors credit in this College subject to approval by a College faculty committee. Transfer students may receive up to six hours of lower-level Honors College credit.

As with TTU Honors classes, a grade of B- or better must be achieved to be eligible for credit. All proposed transfer credits must be reviewed by the curriculum committee on a case-by-case basis.

**HONORS FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE (FYE) COURSE REQUIREMENT**
All incoming first year students are required to participate in and complete the College First-Year Experience (FYE) Program. Students must successfully complete all requirements
of both the FYE lecture class as well as the LCG section (HONS 1101) to remain in good standing in the College.

HONORS SEMINAR COURSE REQUIREMENT

Honors graduates should be able to articulate their thoughts in discussion with others as well as in writing; read complex texts closely for meaning; and appreciate and respond appropriately to the interrelatedness of disciplines and the complexity of problems. Toward these ends, all Honors students are required to take one upper-division Honors seminar, which provides the opportunity for students to develop and enhance the skills that are essential to a well-rounded education.

The characteristics of an Honors seminar are as follows:

1) Seminar courses encourage active engagement in class discussion, thereby developing the ability to articulate ideas in a group setting. Some lecture may be necessary, but in general, seminars encourage interaction between students, and interaction between students and faculty. Typically, 20-45 percent of the course grade is based on regular and ongoing quality participation in in-class discussion;

2) Seminar courses include a challenging reading expectation. Seminars are not textbook-driven, but rather rely on a variety of source material, emphasizing primary source material when possible;

3) Seminar courses encourage students to develop an expertise in the seminar’s topic (or, more commonly, one aspect of the topic), and to share that expertise in the seminar. To this end, seminar instructors engage students in original research or creative work, and interact closely in the process and completion of such projects;

4) Seminar courses encourage the practice of reading and interpreting complex texts, and making critical arguments and inquiries about these texts in writing. Seminars include instruction and practice in the writing process: pre-writing, writing, critical feedback, and revision;

5) Seminar courses emphasize interdisciplinary approaches, reinforcing connections among disciplines;

6) Seminar courses emphasize conceptual frameworks over factual information;

7) For each one hour in class, students spend about two hours outside of class reading, writing, and engaging in creative activity.
Honors students are required to take at least three hours of upper-level Honors seminars. These seminars are offered exclusively through the College. Honors seminar credit can only be awarded through Honors College seminar courses. Seminar credit is not awarded for study abroad or other course waivers, internships, or other special opportunities or experiences, whether Honors or non-Honors. The single exception to this policy is College summer international study, in which Honors professors teach Honors seminar courses abroad for seminar credit.

HONORS SUMMIT EXPERIENCE COURSE REQUIREMENT
After completing twelve Honors credit hours, Honors students are eligible to register for and complete the three hours of upper-level Honors Summit Experience (HONS 4302) coursework. The Honors College recommends that the Summit Experience course be taken only after twelve credit hours of Honors coursework have been completed or preferably in the final year prior to graduation.

Honors graduates are able to articulate their thoughts in discussion with others as well as in writing; read texts critically for meaning; appreciate and respond appropriately to the interrelatedness of disciplines and the complexity of problems, and practice these skills in the classroom and in their everyday lives. The Honors Summit Experience is normally taken in the senior year, a time when undergraduate-level mastery and expertise in a chosen discipline is at its zenith. The contributions of students from various disciplines complement and augment each other, resulting in a rich and vibrant collective experience. Toward these ends, all Honors students are required to take one Summit Experience course, which provides the opportunity for development and enhancement of the skills that are essential to a well-rounded education.

The characteristics of an Honors Summit Experience include, but are not limited to, the following:
1) The Summit Experience may be centered on experiential learning, thereby encouraging the development and mastery of skills useful in the workplace, and in everyday life. Instructors facilitate and participate in guided hands-on experiences, consisting of either one or several short experiences in or out of the classroom, and/or one longer experience in or out of the classroom. In
some cases, the entire course may be taught out of the classroom;

2) **The Summit Experience encourages active engagement in class discussion,** thereby developing the ability to articulate ideas in a group setting. Some lecture may be necessary, but in general, the Summit Experience encourages interaction between students, and between students and faculty;

3) **The Summit Experience includes reading,** but is not necessarily text-driven. It relies on primary source material when possible. Readings serve as background and as a research resource toward better understanding of the hands-on experience;

4) **The Summit Experience encourages students to develop an expertise in the course topic** (or one aspect of the topic), and to share that expertise in the course. To this end, Summit Experience instructors engage students in original research or creative work, and interact closely in the process and completion of such projects;

5) **The Summit Experience encourages the practice of reading and interpreting texts,** and **making critical arguments and inquiries about these texts in writing.** Summit Experiences often, but not always, include instruction and practice in the writing process: pre-writing, writing, critical feedback, and revision;

6) **The Summit Experience emphasizes interdisciplinary approaches,** and encourages connections between disciplines;

7) **The Summit Experience emphasizes conceptual frameworks and factual information** toward a more complete hands-on experience;

8) **The Summit Experience helps prepare students for success through effective communication in a diverse and rapidly changing global society.**

**HONORS COLLEGE CREDIT SUBSTITUTIONS**

Students are permitted to substitute up to six semester credit hours of Honors coursework, excluding the Honors seminar and Summit Experience courses. Five methods are available to students for obtaining these credits as listed below. Students interested in Honors course substitution should consult with a College advisor.
Honors Credit for Undergraduate Research Scholars

Students participating in the Honors College Undergraduate Research Scholars program who would like to earn 3 credit hours of Honors College credit rather than be compensated hourly for research work must meet the following requirements:

1) Students must be a member of the Undergraduate Research Scholars Program.
2) Students must have already completed one semester of research and plan to continue with the same project and/or research trajectory with the same laboratory, faculty member, instructor, etc.

Students may receive a maximum of 3 credit hours of Honors College credit total for Undergraduate Research Scholars during their career.

Contracting

Honors Contracting allows an Honors student to receive Honors credit for a non-Honors course by completing work above and beyond what is required of non-Honors students in the course. Only 3000- and 4000-level courses that meet face-to-face are eligible to be contracted. No independent study or research hours may be contracted. To receive Honors credit for a contracted course, a student must earn a grade of B- or better in the course and satisfactorily complete work in addition to what is already required in the course. There are three essential components of this additional work:

1) A substantial Honors College worthy assignment (12-15 page research paper) that enhances course material but does not duplicate an assignment from the syllabus.
2) Sharing the knowledge/skills/experiences gained through completion of the assignment with a presentation to an audience (the contracting class, student organization, faculty member, etc.) of 15-20 minutes.
3) Regular contact with the faculty member outside of class (minimum of three meetings) to discuss the student’s progress and answer questions regarding the paper/project.

In order to petition to contract a course, arrangements must be made with the Honors Contracting Coordinator during the semester PRECEDING the contracting semester. Please contact an Honors College advisor for more details.
Graduate Courses
As per the university rules, undergraduate students who have completed a minimum of 90 semester credit hours of coursework and who have a 3.00 grade point average or better in their major may seek permission from their academic dean and the Graduate School to enroll in graduate courses in their major. For those exceptional students who are invited by faculty members to participate in graduate classes but who do not meet the university requirements of 90 semester credit hours, please see an advisor so that we may make arrangements for you to take advantage of this special opportunity. Students who are enrolled in graduate courses or who are invited to participate in graduate classes and who earn a B- or better in these courses will be able to receive Honors College credit. Please see an Honors College advisor for more information.

Cross-listed Courses
In the case of courses which enroll a mix of undergraduate and graduate students, enrolled Honors students wishing to receive Honors credit for such a course should see an Honors advisor for specific details.

Study Abroad Waiver
A waiver is available for up to three required Honors hours for students who study abroad with a non-Honors related program. Students who wish to receive Honors credit for a study abroad experience must speak with the College advisor and faculty member coordinating the Study Abroad Waiver program in order to understand the requirements at the beginning of the semester prior to departure. In order to receive Honors credit for a non-Honors study abroad experience, students must complete a written essay based on their overseas experience. This essay must be completed and submitted to the faculty coordinator (for editing, revision, and resubmission) during the first long semester following study abroad. This policy applies to study abroad classes taken during a summer session, or a single fall or spring semester. Students may earn up to three hours of Honors non-seminar credit through this process. Students who study abroad in the semester of their graduation are ineligible for the Study Abroad Waiver.