



HONORS PROGRAM HANDBOOK

WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

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PROGRAM HISTORY AND GOALS

The University Honors Program at Western Connecticut State University was founded in 1987 to foster and nurture academic excellence among outstanding students in all of the four schools of the University. Our program is built on the fundamental assumption that knowledge is an open set of questions and ideas to be explored, rather than a closed set of facts to be memorized. The University Honors Program has four primary goals: 1) to provide an opportunity for academically gifted and motivated students to excel in response to the challenge of an honors enrichment curriculum; 2) to expose students to some of the central modes of inquiry used by fields to understand problems and find solutions; 3) to provide opportunities for students to become part of an active and dynamic honors community and, 4) to emphasize the importance of bringing a multidisciplinary awareness to understanding the world around us.

The program has two paths: 1) the full three year program open to first year students and first semester sophomores, and 2) a one-year or associate option open to juniors, seniors and transfer students. The twelve-member University Honors Council oversees the program.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND DESCRIPTION

Two of the central goals of the University Honors Program is to expose students to some of the fundamental “modes of inquiry” found in various academic fields and to illustrate the importance of utilizing an interdisciplinary approach to understanding topics and issues. With these goals in mind, the full program requires that students take a one credit course entitled “The Nature of Inquiry (HON 100), complete three honors activities, take four honors courses in each of the four “modes of inquiry” (described on page 5) and complete the interdisciplinary capstone seminar (HON 400). Student also may, if they so choose, perform honors enhancements in courses in their major or minor areas of study (see page 17) and/or participate in an Honors Teaching Practicum (HON 497, see page 7). Below is the sequencing of courses in the full Honors Program. Students wishing to take part in the one-year or associate version of the Honors Program must complete one honors activity, one honors course and the capstone seminar (HON 400). All courses, with the exception of Honors 100, may go toward fulfilling general education credit in the area where the course or seminar is taught. The Director must approve variations to this sequence or substitutions.

1) First Semester in Program: “The Nature of Inquiry” (HON 100). This one-credit course entails looking briefly at one issue from a number of disciplinary methods and perspectives. The course also uses library faculty to develop “information literacy” among honors students (every fall semester).

2) Anytime after Admission: The completion of three honors activities. Honors activities are designed to encourage a variety of extracurricular activities for honors students. To fulfill this requirement of the program students may choose volunteer work, tutoring, study-abroad, a state or regional honors conference presentation, active participation in the student group HSO or a host of other activities. All activities must be discussed with the Director before they are undertaken to ensure their worthiness as an honors activity (see page 16 of this handbook).

3) Second Semester of First Year Through Final Year in the Program: The completion of one course or tutorial in each of the four “modes of inquiry” (12 total credits). Each course counts for general education credit in the subject area of the course (at least one course will be offer in one of the modes of inquiry each semester).

4) Final Year in Program: A three-credit interdisciplinary honors capstone seminar (HON 400). In the capstone seminar all modes of inquiry will be used to look at a single topic or issue. Graduating seniors will be given registration preference.

Student must maintain a 3.2 GPA and make satisfactory progress through the program to remain a University Honors Program member. Those falling below the GPA guideline or failing to make adequate progress have one semester to raise their GPA or complete requirements or face expulsion from the program.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FOUR MODES OF INQUIRY

At the heart of the act of knowing lie general epistemes or “modes of inquiry” that organize the way scholars approach and frame the objects they seek to understand. The honors program curriculum at Western is designed to expose students to four broadly conceived modes of inquiry and to provide experience in how those modes shape the questions asked and ultimately the methods by which questions are answered. These modes of inquiry are “textual analysis,” “artistic creation and analysis” “scientific and mathematical analysis” and “historical, social and cultural analysis. Below is a brief description of each.

Textual Analysis:

Inquiry to explore the various ways in which a text conveys meaning or people derive meaning from a text (a text is viewed broadly and may include such items as a written work, popular culture, ritual and symbol).

Artistic Creation and Analysis:

Inquiry through the creation, performance or analysis of a work(s) of theater, art, literature, music, sculpture or other generative activity. Outcomes focus on the production of something artistic or the critical understanding of some type of creative activity.

Scientific and Mathematical Analysis:

Inquiry that utilizes the scientific processes of induction or deduction or some type of logico-mathematical representation or modeling to understand some event or phenomenon.

Historical, Social and Cultural Analysis:

Inquiry that examines how an event or phenomenon is shaped by history, society or culture.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Membership in the University Honors Program provides numerous benefits for participants. First and foremost, the program is designed to foster the type of learning environment that will prepare students for success in graduate school, professional programs or work. As such participation in the program should be placed in a highly visible area on your resume and future applications. Participation in the program signifies to graduate programs and employers that you have undertaken extra efforts to enrich your college work. It is the type of material graduate and professional programs look for when evaluating applications. In addition to these benefits, the honors program also provides a number of specific rewards. To take advantage of these members must remain in “good standing” in the program. This requires that students maintain the GPA guidelines of the program and make satisfactory progress toward completing the requirements of the program. The benefits are:

1. The Honors Program is actively involved with the Admissions Department in the scholarship selection process.
2. Honors students are exempt from extra charges for exceeding 18 credit hours in a semester.
3. Members in good standing are eligible for priority registration. Priority registration normally takes place for two days prior to the beginning of senior registration.
4. There are some Honors Housing options available to live in a special Honors Housing Living/Learning Environment. This option is dependent on a sufficient number of students wishing to form an honors living environment. A description of the Honors Learning Environment is found on page 10 in this handbook.
5. Members in the program have exclusive use of one Honors Cubicle located in the Haas Library. Members also have access to a lap top computer, fast-track recall, subsidized interlibrary loan materials, electronic document delivery, and Yale University Library privileges for extended and special honors projects.
6. With the exception of the one-credit Honors 100, all credit hours earned in the Honors Program can be used to fulfill core requirements in the humanities, social sciences or sciences. Credit allocation is determined by Honors Council based on the mode of inquiry best covered by the course or seminar.
7. The Honors Program has a limited amount of funds available for travel to regional and state honors conferences. Presenting a paper at such conferences counts toward the fulfillment of one of the required “honors activities.”
8. Members may participate in an Honors Teaching Practicum (HTP) during their junior or senior years. This option allows honors students to serve as teaching assistants in a course they have taken in their majors. The student receives 3 credit hours for an HTP.
9. Upon graduating from the program and the university, completion of the program is noted on the transcript. This entitles the graduate to wear special cords during graduation and to receive special recognition in the graduation program. A certificate indicating program completion is mailed in the summer after graduation.

HONORS TEACHING PRACTICUM APPLICATION AND DESCRIPTION

The Honors Teaching Practicum (HTP) allows junior and senior honors students to assist a professor in a 100 or 200 level class that they have taken within their major or minor (the student must have received at least an A- for the course when s/he initially registered and s/he is strongly recommended to take the HTP with the professor they took the course with). The main objectives of the HTP are to offer students experience with some of the issues involved in conveying knowledge to others and to reacquaint them with some of the central knowledge content of their field of study. In order to accomplish these goals, students may organize study sessions, provide individual student tutorials, provide guidance with writing assignments, oversee group projects or labs, organize class discussion sessions or oversee other related class activities. Students will be required to teach at least 2 class sessions, self-evaluate the 2 teaching sessions, provide an assessment of teaching methods, and write a philosophy of teaching statement at the beginning and end of the semester. ***Students are, however, prohibited from grading*** any of the activities they oversee or from performing purely administrative functions. Students are required to regularly attend the class in which they are assisting.

Professors overseeing HTP students will provide students with related pedagogical materials (the Honors Program has pedagogical books that can be checked out) and opportunities for them to reflect on the materials and their classroom experiences in writing, such as in a journal or reaction papers.

The number of credit hours is determined by the credit hours of the course in which the practicum is taking place (i.e., 3 hours for a 3 credit hour class, or 4 hours for a course with a lab). An HTP may be repeated one additional time for credit and may not exceed a total of eight credit hours. For more information, please contact the Director of the Honors Program.

PREREQUISITE: Minimum of 60 credit hours, permission of the instructor and member of the Honors Program or permission from the Director of the Honors Program. The student must complete the Form for Registering for an Honors Teaching Practicum (HON 497).

FORM FOR REGISTERING FOR AN HONORS TEACHING PRACTICUM (HON 497)

FALL ____ 20 ____ / SPRING ____ 20 ____ SUMMER ____ 20 ____ Course# _____

STUDENT _____ ID# _____

FULL TIME ____ / PART TIME ____ Grade Earned in Course _____

NUMBER OF CREDIT HOURS ____

The Honors Teaching Practicum (HTP) allows junior and senior honors students to assist a professor in a 100 or 200 level class that they have taken within their major or minor (the student must have received at least an A- for the course when s/he initially registered and s/he is strongly recommended to take the HTP with the professor they took the course with). The main objectives of the HTP are to offer students experience with some of the issues involved in conveying knowledge to others and to reacquaint them with some of the central knowledge content of their field of study. In order to accomplish these goals, students may organize study sessions, provide individual student tutorials, provide guidance with writing assignments, oversee group projects or labs, organize class discussion sessions or oversee other related class activities. Students will be required to teach at least 2 class sessions, self-evaluate the 2 teaching sessions, provide an assessment of teaching methods, and write a philosophy of teaching statement at the beginning and end of the semester. ***Students are, however, prohibited from grading*** any of the activities they oversee or from performing purely administrative functions. Students are required to regularly attend the class in which they are assisting.

FACULTY SUPERVISOR _____

APPROVED BY: _____
Chairperson Date

APPROVED BY: _____
Director of Honors Program Date

APPROVED BY: _____
Dean Date

For ____ Faculty Workload Credit(s)

HONORS STUDENT ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

The group's goals are to provide opportunities for academic and cultural growth, as well as personal performance, community service and social interaction. Frequent social gatherings are held to update members on happenings within the group and to plan activities. Members of HSO need not be members of the University Honors Program, although they must maintain a minimum 3.2 GPA. Members of HSO may apply for admission to the Honors Program if they so choose. Students in the Honors Program may use being an officer or an active member of the program as a means of fulfilling one of their "honors activities" requirements. For more information contact the Director of the program.

DESCRIPTION OF HONORS HOUSING ENVIRONMENT

The University Honors Program Living and Learning Cluster is a program launched in the fall of 2001 for honors students and their roommates. The co-educational cluster is open to all honors students in good standing. The goal of the cluster is to allow honors students to live together in a supportive environment in order to facilitate academic achievement and to enjoy social and cultural activities. The cluster is designed to be conducive to academic study. Therefore, quiet hours are extended beyond typical Residence Hall quiet hours. Roommates of honors students need not be members of the honors program; however, they must interview with students in residence in the cluster or the Director of the University Honors Program before being admitted. They also must sign an agreement to abide by the Honors Housing Cluster's rules. An application for the Honors Living and Learning Cluster is available in the housing office in Newbury Hall. For more information, contact Charles Alexander, Assistant to the Director of Housing, at 837-8770. Formation of the Honors Housing Cluster requires a sufficient number of honors students who wish to continue it. A new application must be submitted each year.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Please use this form to notify the Honors Program Director if your address, phone number, or e-mail changes. It is important to keep your e-mail address current in order to receive updates from the program, happenings in the HSO organization and notification of priority registration dates. **All communications from the Director and the Honors Council are via email.**

Name:

Student ID:

New Home Address:

New Campus Address:

New Telephone and New E-Mail (most often used):

New Major:

APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION FROM THE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

In order to complete the program, receive recognition in the graduation program, obtain a certificate of completion and honors cords, please submit this form to the Honors Program Office (Honors Mailbox in Warner 224) by March 1st for spring graduation or October 15th for fall graduation from the university.

Name: _____
(As you would like it printed on certificate)

Student ID Number: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Address to where certificate is to be mailed: _____

Program Membership: _____ University Honors Program (Full Program)
_____ Associate University Honors Program (one year)

Full Program

Honors Core Requirements

Semester and Year _____ Honors 100 (The Nature of Inquiry)

Semester and Year _____ Honors 400 (Capstone Seminar)

Honors Courses in the Four Modes of Inquiry (include any approved substitutions):

Scientific and Mathematical Analysis (course name and year) _____

Textual Analysis (course name and year) _____

Artistic Creation and Analysis (course name and year) _____

Social, Historical and Cultural Analysis (course name and year) _____

Approved Honors Activities Completed:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Associate Program

Semester and Year _____ Honors 400 (Capstone Seminar)

Honors Level Course (course name and year) _____

Approved Honors Activities Completed:

1. _____

Use the back to list any honors course enhancements or approved substitutions.

ASSIGNMENT OF HONORS COURSE AND SEMINAR CREDIT

From: Honors Director
To: Registrar
Re: General Education Requirement Category for Honors Courses and Seminars

Student Name:

Student I.D. Number:

Course Title, Semester and Year:

For the purpose of meeting the General Education requirement, the above honors course or seminar may be counted as the selection checked below. The selection is based on the nature of the courses and the work the student did during the above semester.

Humanities

Social Sciences

Natural Science (without a lab)*

Other (_____)**

Student's signature

Honors Program Director's signature

Department Chair's Signature (if needed)

Please inform your advisor of this choice and keep a record of this choice in case you later change majors.

*In some instances the course may be enhanced for lab credit.

**Requires Department Chair signature for major or minor credit.

HONORS INTERDISCIPLINARY BACHELORS DEGREE PROGRAM (HIBDP) DESCRIPTION

The HIBDP is a special kind of honors contract major. Recognizing that the traditional division of knowledge into subject areas or disciplines is, to some degree, artificial, the University makes it possible for the highly motivated student to pursue a specialized course of study that examines in depth a single theme or idea from the perspective of two or more disciplines. A student might, for example, wish to pursue a course of study focusing on the Middle Ages, combining the disciplines of history, literature, philosophy, art history, music history and Latin. The student who chooses this option works closely with a faculty advisor and thesis director. The specific procedures for establishing an Honors Interdisciplinary Bachelors Degree Program are on the next page.

PROCEDURES FOR ESTABLISHING AN HIBDP

1. The student should formulate the name and content of the HIBDP in consultation with at least one advisor from each of the departments where nine or more credit hours will be drawn. These advisors will also normally serve as members of the honors thesis committee (described below). The Honors Council recommends that the proposal for a HIBDP receive final approval prior to the senior year. Students must maintain a 3.2 GPA or higher in order to be eligible for a HIBDP.
2. The student should write a proposal for the HIBDP containing a description and rationale for the major. Also, the student should fill in a program sheet stating how general education and the HIBDP credits will be fulfilled (the program sheets are available from the Dean of Arts & Sciences or the Registrar's Office). All programs should contain between 39-50 credit hours including 3-6 hours of thesis credit taken as a Student Developed Study (SDS). At least two thirds of the credit hours must be from courses 200 level or higher (with at least six credits hours drawn from courses 300 or higher). At least one-half of the course credits must be drawn from courses taken at Western. Under unusual circumstances a student may petition the Honors Council for an alteration to the above credit hour requirements.
3. The student should obtain approval for the HIBDP from chairs of departments where nine or more credit hours are drawn.
4. The student should submit the proposal with chairs' signatures to the University Honors Council for review via the Dean of Arts & Sciences office (Warner 300).
5. If approved by the Honors Council, the student should submit the proposal, program sheet and approval page to the chair of the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards (CUCAS). Once the program is approved by CUCAS only a three-hour change in the overall program can be made. In cases where a change is necessary, the student must petition the Honors Council to request such change.
6. If approved by CUCAS, the student should submit a change of major form to the Registrar's Office.
7. Before the final year the student should form a thesis committee consisting of at least one member of each of the departments where nine or more credit hours are drawn. This committee, along with the Honors Council, will be responsible for approving the honors thesis.
8. The student should present the thesis orally to the Honors Council and the thesis committee. If approved by both, credit will be given for the thesis (SDS).

HONORS ACTIVITY APPROVAL FORM

Submit this form to the Director of the Honors Program to request that an activity be counted toward fulfillment of your honors requirements. Students are required to complete three honors activities as part of the program. The Director must approve all honors activities in advance.

Name:

Type of Activity: Volunteer Work Study Abroad Internship

HSO Involvement Conference Presentation Other (specify)

Nature of Activity:

Is the Activity Supervised? Yes No If yes, by who (name, position and contact number)

Is course credit being earned for the activity? Yes No

Dates activity is to occur: (from) _____ (to) _____

Total number of hours to be devoted to the activity _____

Student's Signature

Director's Signature

THE HONORS ENHANCED COURSE DESCRIPTION

The University Honors Council supports and encourages students and faculty to develop individual honors level components where this is appropriate and possible. Any course may be used as the basis for an honors level enhancement by adding some additional, honors level dimension to the usual requirements. The student is expected to initiate the honors enhancement and complete the application process outlined below. When a course is enhanced, one credit is added to the course total and the honors designation, "Honors" will appear on the student's transcript next to the course grade.

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

All students in good standing in the University Honors Program are automatically eligible; any student with a GPA of 3.2 or higher at the time of application is eligible.

ELIGIBLE FACULTY

All faculty members are eligible to participate. Consideration in the form of a partial credit hour is associated with enhancement in the same amount as a student developed study (one semester hour for the student = .11 load credit for faculty).

CONSIDERATIONS OF TIME

Course enhancements are generally formed during the semester in which the course is being taken. Students are advised that the process should be completed within the first four weeks of the semester.

HONORS ENHANCED COURSE APPLICATION AND APPROVAL

An enhancement is established through a contract between the Honors Program student and faculty member (see Part 2 and all four of its sub-points below) and the completion of the appropriate forms (i.e., the Project Approval and the Faculty Workload Credit forms). The COMPLETED application contains (1) the Project Approval Form, (2) an enhancement contract, and (3) the Request for Faculty Workload Credit Form. When all three components of the application are completed and signed in the order that appears on the Project Approval Form, the appropriate Dean's office (the Dean of the school in which the course is offered) should send copies to the Honors Director, the Registrar, and the student. The deadline for submitting the completed application is the third Friday of every semester. Summer and Intercession enhancements will only be approved under extremely exceptional circumstances.

PARTS OF AN ENHANCED COURSE APPLICATION

1. Project Approval Form: The student must fill it out and secure the required approval and signatures in the order that they appear on the form. Every enhancement is subject to the approval of the Honors Program Director and the Dean of the school in which the course is offered.
2. Enhancement Contract: The student must provide a description of the honors project by using the following numbers and titles (a minimum of at least a page is required).
 1. Rationale: The student must outline (1) the objectives of the honors component, (2) the reasons for undertaking the enhancement, and (3) how the planned activities enhance the course to honors level in at least three ways (i.e., adding to the syllabus, making the course interdisciplinary, creating a multi-cultural element to a course, including a dimension of public service, etc...).
 2. Enhancement: List and describe, in some detail, the particular elements of the honors component. At a minimum, the student must undertake at least 20 extra workload hours for the enhancement. Include whatever activities are supplemental or alternative to the regular requirements of the course (i.e., extra written or lab work, projects, presentations, meetings with outside mentors, etc...).
 3. Evaluation Process: Describe the grading process of the honors component (i.e., the student is graded on all work, including the honors component; or a separate grade is given for the enhancement which is then averaged in with the grading for the regular requirements of the course, etc...). Only one grade is ultimately given for the course.
 4. Scheduling: Provide a schedule of deadlines and/or due dates for specific activities (i.e., weekly meetings, interviews with outside mentors, attendance at events on or off campus, all assigned work, etc...). At a minimum, at least one weekly meeting between the faculty member and the student for one-half hour must occur.
3. Request for Faculty Workload Credit: The student must acquire the appropriate signatures and submit the form as part of a complete application. **A revised contract must be attached for adjunct faculty.** Full time faculty must attach a revised contract for summer and intercession enhancements only.

HONORS COURSE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT APPROVAL FORM

COURSE NUMBER AND NAME

SEMESTER/YEAR

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:

STUDENT NAME & NUMBER

SIGNATURE/ DATE

FACULTY MEMBER

SIGNATURE/DATE

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

SIGNATURE/DATE

HONORS DIRECTOR

SIGNATURE/DATE

If the faculty member is an adjunct, please attach contract.

DEAN

SIGNATURE/DATE

Attach: honors enhancement contract and request for faculty workload credit. When completed, forward copies to the Honors Director and Registration.

UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM PROGRAM SHEET

NAME: _____ ID#: _____

Refer to the following pages in the Honors Program Handbook:

Program Requirements and Description page

Description of the Four Modes of Inquiry

Honors Activity Approval Form

I. Honors courses:

1. Fill in the semesters that you completed required courses HON 100 and HON 400

NOTE: HON 400 should not be considered until after completion of at least 3 of the 4 modes of inquiry. Graduating seniors will be given registration preference.

	HON 100	HON 400
Semester		

2. Fill in the course numbers of Honors Courses and Enhanced Courses, as well as the _____ semester taken

	HON COURSE 1 TEXTUAL ANALYSIS	HON COURSE 2 SCIENTIFIC AND MATHEMATICAL ANALYSIS	HON COURSE 3 HISTORICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANALYSIS	HON COURSE 4 ARTISTIC CREATION ANALYSIS
COURSE #				
SEMESTER				

FOUR MODES OF INQUIRY

II. Honors Activities:

1. Check off that you submitted the form to the Program Director
2. Fill in the dates or semester(s) of the activities and a brief description

#	FORM	DATES	DESCRIPTION
1.			
2.			
3.			

ASSOCIATE HONORS PROGRAM SHEET

NAME: _____ ID#: _____

Refer to the following pages in the Honors Program Handbook:

Program Requirements and Description page

Description of the Four Modes of Inquiry

Honors Activity Approval Form

I. Honors courses:

1. Fill in the course number and semester of an Honors course or enhanced course taken
2. Fill in the semesters that you completed required course HON 400

	HON 400	HON COURSE
COURSE #		
Semester		

II. Honors Activities:

1. Check off that you submitted the form to the Program Director
2. Fill in the dates or semester(s) of the Honors Activity and a brief description

FORM	DATES	DESCRIPTION