

# Advising Guide for the University Honors Program

## Student Admission to the University Honors Program:

- ▶ Students may be offered conditional membership as an incoming freshman based on high school GPA and test scores. They are offered one semester of conditional membership during which time they must establish the 3.5 cumulative college GPA required for continuing membership.
- ▶ Students who are not current Honors members but who have achieved a 3.5 cumulative GPA after the spring or fall semester of the freshman or sophomore year are invited to apply each semester in September and/or January. All applications are reviewed by the Honors Faculty Committee and students are notified of their status prior to registration for the following semester.
- ▶ Junior or senior students with a 3.5 GPA who are not already members of the Honors Program can request special consideration for admission at any time by contacting the Honors Program Director. Careful planning may be required to complete the necessary Honors requirements if admitted after the sophomore year.

## Honors Program Requirements:

- **Maintain a 3.50 cumulative GPA through graduation**
- **Complete all department honors requirements in their academic major**
- **Take and successfully complete two Honors Courses (HONR 300 / HONR 301)**
- **Complete and successfully defend an Honors Thesis that counts for both departmental and University Honors**

1. **GPA Requirements:** Students must maintain a cumulative 3.50 GPA to be in the University Honors Program and to register for Honors Seminars, Honors Contracts and Honors Theses. If a student falls below the 3.5 GPA, they will be removed from the Honors Program at the end of the semester. Students can reapply to the Honors Program if they again achieve the minimum 3.5 GPA in a subsequent semester.

2. **Honors Courses:** Honors students may fulfill the requirement for two Honors classes in two ways:

They can take two HONR 300 Seminars. These seminars fulfill a general education requirement and may be writing intensive. They are limited to 15 students. Check the Open Course Schedule or Honors Program website for current seminar offerings.

### OR

A student can take one HONR 300 seminar and one HONR 301 Contract. The Honors Contract allows Honors students to combine Honors credit with an upper level (200+) class already included on their schedule, assuming distinctive work above and beyond existing course requirements is completed. This work must be agreed upon in consultation with the faculty member offering the course, but should amount to additional work of at least 10 pages (or a suitably equivalent project for non-writing-based courses).

**\*\*Honors Contracts can only be applied to a course that is 200 level or above and a student **may not take more than one** Honors Contract.**

3. **Honors Thesis:** A student must have a 3.50 cumulative GPA to enroll for the 499 Honors Thesis.

Students undertake their Honors Thesis in the department of their major as part of the established departmental honors process. If a student has a dual major, they should decide in which department

they wish to do their thesis. **Dual majors do not have to complete a thesis in each major. They may choose one major where they will complete the thesis.**

### **Suggested Timeline for Honors Requirements:**

Students who are University Honors students are identified with “Pre-Honors” (for new students with conditional membership in their first semester) or “HONR” (for students with full membership) designations as a Specialization in Self-Service. Advisors should discuss with their Honors student advisees how they could complete their General Education requirements by taking Honors Seminars. While there is no mandated sequence or schedule as to when Honors students complete their honors course requirements, ideally students should take these courses in their sophomore and junior years so that they may concentrate on completing their Honors Thesis in their senior year. Exceptional and motivated first-year students could also enroll for an Honors Seminar in the spring of their first year.

### **Registration:**

#### **Honors Seminars:**

- 1) **\*\*Non-Freshman** and spring semester freshman students can register for an Honors seminar online IF they have a cumulative 3.5 GPA AND are designated in the Self-Service Student Planning System as an Honors student (HONR).
- 2) Fall semester freshman students or new transfer students who desire to register for an Honors seminar in the spring semester must contact the Honors Program staff via e-mail to indicate their desire to register since they have not yet established a 3.5 Wittenberg GPA. Honors Program staff will forward the request to the Registrar with the necessary Honors Program verification and approval.

#### **Honors Contracts/Honors Thesis:**

- 1) Students cannot register for Honors contracts or Honors thesis credits online with the rest of their regular coursework – a separate paper registration form must be completed for each.
- 2) To register for an Honors contract (HONR 301) a student must complete the contract form from the Honor’s Program website with the information on the class and the Honors work that will be performed in the contract. They should get the course instructor’s approval via signature or e-mail and provide the completed contract to the Administrative staff of the Honors Program for processing by the **end of the first week of classes**.

Link to the Honors Contract form:

<http://www.wittenberg.edu/academics/honorsprogram/contracts.html>

- 3) Students must register for an Honors Thesis using the 499 Thesis Registration Form. A separate registration form must be completed for each semester. Number of credits should be decided in close consultation with the thesis advisor and be based on the departmental honors requirements, the scope of the work to be completed and the student’s credit load for the semester. Registration requires approval from the thesis advisor, two additional committee members, the department chair and an Honors Program administrator. Approvals should be submitted by signature on the registration form. Electronic signatures are acceptable.

Here is a link to the form for Honors 499 (Honors Thesis):

[http://www.wittenberg.edu/sites/default/files/media/registrar/Honors%20Thesis%20Proposal\\_0.pdf](http://www.wittenberg.edu/sites/default/files/media/registrar/Honors%20Thesis%20Proposal_0.pdf)

**Honors Thesis Timeline:** Early in the junior year, academic departments should identify which of their students are eligible to pursue Departmental Honors and undertake an honors thesis. The student should meet with the appropriate faculty member (Department Chair, faculty advisor or potential thesis advisor) to review the Departmental Honors requirements and begin to develop and design their Honors Thesis. The University Honors Program holds a mandatory Thesis meeting for University Honors students early in the Junior year to provide detailed information about the thesis registration and completion process. Students pursuing Departmental Honors should be encouraged to attend.

If the student plans on working on their Honors Thesis in the Fall semester, they must have their project approved and all the necessary approvals on the Honors Thesis form to submit the form by the Friday of the first week of classes to Honors Administrative staff. If they will continue or begin their research in the Spring they should complete a separate registration form and submit it by the end of the first week of Spring semester. The Honors Program Staff will then submit them to the Registrar's office.

**\*\*Please note that it is expected that the Honors Thesis defense will be completed and passed before December 1 for Fall semester and May 1 for Spring semester. Extensions are allowed in special cases. Students have one week after the defense deadlines to turn in the final thesis to the Honors Program.**

#### **University Honors versus Departmental Honors:**

If a student wants to complete the requirements for graduating with University Honors they **MUST** be a member of the University Honors Program AND take and successfully complete all Honors requirements including a University Honors Thesis (Honors 499) in the discipline of their major.

A Departmental Honors thesis, however, can be undertaken by any student in the department of their major as long as they have a 3.50 GPA. If a non-Honors student successfully completes a Departmental Honors Thesis, they graduate with Departmental Honors **not** University Honors. But a University Honors Student who successfully completes a University Honors Thesis in their major department will graduate with **both** University and Departmental Honors. However, a University Honors Student **does not have** to undertake two different theses to receive both Departmental and University Honors.

The 499 thesis registration forms for ALL Honors theses (University and Departmental) **must be approved by the Honors Program Administrative Staff** before they are submitted to the Registrar even if the student will graduate with only Departmental Honors. Students achieving University Honors ALSO receive Departmental Honors in their major academic discipline.

Questions? Confused?

Consult the Honors Program website: <https://www.wittenberg.edu/academics/honorsprogram>

OR

E-mail Beth Hallauer: [hallauerb@wittenberg.edu](mailto:hallauerb@wittenberg.edu)