

University of Iowa Honors Program

Director

- Art L. Spisak

Associate Director

- Robert F. Kirby

Website: <https://honors.uiowa.edu/>

The University of Iowa Honors Program enriches the undergraduate experience by cultivating intellectual curiosity and practical skill through challenging course work, creative engagement, and experiential learning to nurture a deeper understanding of one's discipline and self.

Honors at Iowa challenges students and helps them make connections and develop self-authorship through self-discovery. For example, honors students learn from some of the top professors on campus when they enroll in the University's many honors courses. They also make lasting connections and learn from each other through the honors community in the Honors House residence hall.

With support from numerous programs, honors students engage in a wide variety of academic and cocurricular activities. They enjoy extended library privileges, including longer loan periods. Honors Writing Fellows refine their own writing skills while they mentor other student writers. Some students investigate topics for Iowa communities and the Iowa Legislature through the Iowa Policy Research Organization. Those who need to find mentors and funding for research may request help from the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates.

All honors students may take part in programs that offer opportunities in the arts, sciences, politics, international relations, cultural explorations, and a variety of field trips.

The honors staff helps students tailor their honors curricula to enrich their majors. The staff also helps arrange internships, service learning, study away, teaching, and other experiences for students exploring their interests in and beyond the classroom.

Academic Activities

Honors Ambassadors earn academic credit for acquiring and then sharing knowledge of honors opportunities by organizing events around campus and meeting with prospective students and their families.

Honors Writing Fellows are trained and paid to assist in undergraduate courses by mentoring a dozen students each semester on two major writing assignments.

The **ICRU Research Ambassadors** earn academic credit for showing how and why research with faculty mentors is an important aspect of education at the University of Iowa.

The **Iowa Policy Research Organization** selects a dozen honors students each year to earn academic credit by learning how to conduct policy analysis and then writing policy papers for Iowa communities and the Iowa Legislature.

Study abroad in foreign countries enables students to earn academic credit for course work, research, or service.

Learn more about honors activities and Experiential Learning on the honors program website.

Cocurricular Programs

Honors at Iowa offers students a rich variety of activities outside the classroom. Many honors students find cocurricular programming a good way to meet people, get involved, and learn more about themselves and the world around them. Some of the programs are volunteer-based, some offer pay, and some award honors credit. These opportunities provide peak educational experiences, especially extensive and intensive interactions with faculty mentors and other talented students.

Honors newsletters inform readers on and beyond the campus about honors at the University of Iowa.

The **Honors student staff** earn pay to make the Blank Honors Center useful to students. They also produce most honors cocurricular programs.

Honors Summer Ambassadors earn pay to orient entering students to the honors program by informing them of academic opportunities and activities.

ICRU Fellows receive scholarships from the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates to conduct research and creative projects with faculty mentors in professional fields of study.

The **Iowa City Foreign Relations Council** hosts luncheon dialogues on current international issues. Past speakers include award-winning journalists, Nobel Peace Prize laureates, seasoned diplomats, prominent politicians, and policy analysts. Listening to and talking with these expert speakers allow honors students to become better informed about world affairs.

The **Presidential Scholars Program** engages recipients of the University of Iowa's top merit scholarships in shared classes, opportunities for research in the first year, and service. Scholars participate in legacy projects, events with faculty and key administrators, scholarship and fellowship mentoring programs, and volunteer projects.

To learn more, visit [Programs and Events](#) on the honors program website.

Financial Support

Honors at Iowa helps students apply for scholarships, fellowships, awards, and prizes. The program offers its own scholarships to continuing honors students selected from academic programs throughout the University. Honors scholarships are not available to incoming first-year or transfer students.

Iowa students win major national and international scholarships each year. Honors provides advising and nominations for Rhodes, Marshall, Gates Cambridge, Churchill, Truman, Udall, Goldwater, Humanity in Action, National Science Foundation, and other prominent scholarships and fellowships. The Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates provides research scholarships for students who pursue research or creative projects under the mentorship of University of Iowa faculty members. Announcements about scholarships and other awards appear in honors program emails and on the program's website. Learn more at [UI Undergraduate Scholarships and Fellowships](#) on the honors program website.

Programs

Undergraduate Program of Study University Honors

Honors at Iowa helps students tailor opportunities to different educational needs and goals. Honors students may take honors courses each semester that they are enrolled at the University. Honors courses are generally small and interactive. They connect students with distinguished professors and offer new topics each semester. Honors courses also are part of the GE CLAS Core curriculum and do not add requirements for graduation.

Students are encouraged to begin honors work early. In HONR:1100 Honors Primetime, entering students earn 1 s.h. of honors credit by taking a short course a few days before fall classes begin. Students who enter the honors program directly from high school take HONR:1300 Honors First-Year Seminar with selected professors on current topics, earning 1 s.h. in the fall semester. Honors students may fulfill GE CLAS Core requirements by completing honors sections such as RHET:1030 Rhetoric, ENGL:1200 The Interpretation of Literature, and CHEM:1110 Principles of Chemistry I.

Upper-level students may take honors courses in their majors or pursue individual instruction with faculty members through honors courses such as HONR:3994 Honors Research Practicum. Students also may earn honors credit for a non-honors course by developing an honors contract with the course instructor; the student and instructor negotiate a unique project for the course and develop the honors contract around the project.

Additional academic opportunities include honors advanced seminars, honors major seminars, graduate courses, honors studies, and honors practicums in teaching and service.

Students learn about honors opportunities in weekly emails from the honors program. Honors professional staff members and peer advisors offer guidance in personal meetings and group presentations. In addition, the honors staff helps students design individualized curricula for their special interests. To learn more, visit University Honors Requirements on the honors program website.

Joining the Honors Program

Honors at Iowa offers membership based on grades and test scores to students entering the University directly from high school.

New transfer students who have a cumulative g.p.a. of at least 3.50 and have earned at least 24 s.h. of college credit are offered membership to the honors program. Transfer students with fewer than 24 s.h. of college credit are considered for honors on the same basis as students who enter the University directly from high school.

Continuing University of Iowa students who earn a UI cumulative g.p.a. of at least 3.50 are eligible to join the honors program.

To remain in the honors program and to graduate with University Honors, students must maintain a University of Iowa cumulative g.p.a. of at least 3.33 and complete specific honors program requirements. For more information about joining the University of Iowa Honors Program, see Eligibility on the program's website.

Honors in the Major

In addition to graduating with University Honors through the University of Iowa Honors Program, students may graduate with honors in their major. Each college and/or major sets its own requirements for graduation with honors. Graduation with honors in the major are recognized at commencement and are noted on the student's transcript. Visit the individual Catalog sections to learn about requirements for honors in the major.

Graduation with University Honors

Students must accept a formal invitation from the University of Iowa Honors Program in order to become members; see "Joining the Honors Program" above.

All students who enter the honors program must attend an honors orientation.

Graduation with University Honors through the University of Iowa Honors Program is recognized at commencement and is noted on the student's diploma and transcript. Honors program students completing degree programs in the Colleges of Education, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Nursing, and the Tippie College of Business may graduate with University Honors.

Graduation with University Honors requires the following work.

University Honors Curriculum

Students earning bachelor's degrees at the University of Iowa must complete honors course work and experiential learning in order to graduate with University Honors. Students are not required to complete all honors course work requirements before they begin experiential learning.

Honors Course Work

Students earn 12 s.h. of credit in honors course work during their first four full semesters in the program. Students may count a maximum of one honors contract course toward the course work requirement; under preapproved circumstances, they may count up to 6 s.h. of honors contract course credit. The following honors course work must be completed.

Complete an honors First-Year Seminar during the first semester at the University of Iowa (for students who enter the honors program directly from high school).

Complete an honors course or an honors contract course during the first full semester in the honors program.

Complete additional honors course work to total at least 12 s.h.

Experiential Learning

Students complete 12 s.h. of honors credits in approved experiential learning activities. Students may satisfy the requirement with one of the options below, or they may combine two or more of these options.

Earn honors in the major; this option fulfills the entire experiential learning requirement.

Earn up to 12 s.h. in honors credits in mentored research; this fulfills the entire experiential learning requirement. Students who earn less credit for mentored research may combine it with another option to fulfill the experiential learning requirement.

Study abroad and internships can earn up to 12 s.h. in honors credits depending on the length of the experience and the satisfactory completion of a pre- and post-experience questionnaire, a personal narrative, and

an optional independent project. Students who earn the maximum 12 s.h. in honors credits fulfill the entire experiential learning requirement; those who earn less credit with the study abroad and internships option may combine it with another option to fulfill the experiential learning requirement.

Earn up to 9 s.h. in honors credits serving as an Honors Writing Fellow.

Earn up to 4 s.h. in honors credits participating in the Iowa Policy Research Organization.

Earn up to 6 s.h. in honors credits for preapproved honors course work. See Experiential Learning for details.

Facilities

Blank Honors Center

Honors at Iowa makes its home in the Blank Honors Center, a modern facility that fosters community among honors students. The Blank Honors Center is located at the center of the University's main campus, next to residence halls and classroom buildings. It offers social areas, a kitchenette, quiet study areas, wireless Internet access, a computer lab, and classrooms for students. The center also houses the honors staff and has rooms for meetings, events, presentations, and conversation.

Honors Residential Communities

The honors program sponsors living-learning communities. Each community hosts its own social events, and all community members have access to the full range of honors academic and cocurricular opportunities. Honors housing is for first-year honors students and is located near the Blank Honors Center.

Students must apply to live in the honors residential communities. See Communities on the University Housing and Dining website for information about how to apply. Visit Honors House on the honors program website to learn more about the honors living-learning communities.

Courses

University of Iowa Honors Program Courses

HONR:1100 Honors Primetime 1 s.h.
Preparation for honors opportunities, especially activities and courses; team work on projects that develop skills of invention and communication; presentation of products and performances; connect honors students, honors teachers, and staff members.

HONR:1300 Honors First-Year Seminar 1-2 s.h.
Small discussion classes taught by faculty members on special topics; may include outside activities (e.g., films, lectures, performances, readings, visits to research facilities, field trips). Requirements: first- or second-semester standing.

HONR:1350 Honors Seminar for Incoming Presidential Scholars 1 s.h.

Designed to help students know themselves and one another better through participation in selected events and structured experiences; students attend events selected from the University and Iowa City's rich intellectual and cultural offerings, such as art workshops, literary readings, presentations in the sciences and humanities, hands-on engineering demonstrations, dance recitals, political forums, plays, and music performances (students decide as a group which events they attend); in-class discussion, small-group work, and guest presentations; for first-year Presidential Scholars. Requirements: Presidential Scholarship award received when admitted to the University of Iowa.

HONR:1610 Honors Seminar in Historical Perspectives 3 s.h.

Small-class learning with a faculty member to explore and explain historical developments. GE: Historical Perspectives.

HONR:1620 Honors Seminar in International and Global Issues 3 s.h.

Small-class learning with a faculty member to introduce perspectives of other nations and cultures through international or global issues. GE: International and Global Issues.

HONR:1630 Honors Seminar in Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts 3 s.h.

Small-class learning with a faculty member to appreciate, analyze, create, or perform art. GE: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts.

HONR:1640 Honors Seminar in Natural Sciences 3 s.h.

Small-class learning with a faculty member on natural science topics. GE: Natural Sciences without Lab.

HONR:1660 Honors Seminar in Social Sciences 3 s.h.

Small-class learning with a faculty member on social science topics. GE: Social Sciences.

HONR:1670 Values and Culture 3 s.h.

Asking fundamental questions about human experience and its meaning while becoming more aware of what, exactly, defines culture and values; students have a chance to consider their own values and beliefs, and the importance to their lifelong goals.

HONR:1850 Honors Seminar in Communication and Literacy 3 s.h.

Small-class learning with a faculty member; focus on writing, speaking, and critical reading skills or analysis of fiction, poetry, drama, essays.

HONR:1883 War 3 s.h.

Emotions soldiers have as they fight, what makes them continue voluntarily to face death, and how modern society memorializes these experiences; how literature and art transform the experience of war; human responses to war in Homer's *Iliad* and select Greek tragedies. GE: Values and Culture. Same as CLSA:1883.

HONR:1885 Reading the Ancient City 3 s.h.

How ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern peoples from third millennium B.C.E. to fourth century C.E. described, celebrated, and deplored life in their great cities (Babylon, Jerusalem, Athens, Rome); readings selected from ancient literary prose, poetry, drama, and religious writings; study of popular writing (e.g., ancient inscriptions, graffiti, letters, and magic spells). GE: Interpretation of Literature.

HONR:2600 Honors Special Topics 1-3 s.h.

Small-class learning with a faculty member on special topics.

HONR:2800 The Green Room 1-3 s.h.

Exploring and broadening interests outside of one's academic discipline; follow innate curiosity and go beyond the traditional boundaries of the college curriculum. Requirements: member of the honors program and in good standing (UI cumulative g.p.a. of 3.33 or higher).

HONR:3050 Honors Studies arr.

Independent studies arranged with faculty members who certify satisfactory completion of study plans and performance for topics not covered by other UI courses.

HONR:3100 Honors Teaching Practicum 1-3 s.h.

Teaching internship in first- and second-year courses; may include providing tutorial assistance, conducting review sessions, aiding course organization.

HONR:3150 Honors Service Learning arr.

Service learning projects arranged with faculty members who certify satisfactory completion of study plans and service.

HONR:3160 Honors Internship 0-3 s.h.

Independent service internship arranged with faculty members, who certify satisfactory performance and completion of project.

HONR:3170 Honors Outreach Ambassadors 1-2 s.h.

Experience sharing knowledge and experiences of the honors program with other students in meetings during office hours, online chats, other venues; outreach ambassadors; answer questions, provide information, help students find honors opportunities in and out of class.

HONR:3210 Honors Policy Research Practicum 1 s.h.

Theory and practice of public policy research; development of policy-research skills; production of policy-research papers. Requirements: sophomore or junior standing.

HONR:3220 Honors Writing Fellows: Writing Theory and Practice 3 s.h.

Preparation of honors students selected as writing fellows to serve as peer tutors in writing-intensive courses; theories of writing, evaluation of drafts, peer tutoring with students. Requirements: sophomore or junior honors standing, admission to Writing Fellows Program, and availability to work as a writing fellow in subsequent semesters.

HONR:3250 Fieldwork in Social Innovation 3 s.h.

Entrepreneurial skills necessary to actualize ideas in the community; students work with local partners to brainstorm, prototype, and build an original community-based venture involving needs assessment, social history of problem, and concept mapping; students learn soft skills such as interviewing, networking, collaboration, and building trust. Requirements: enrollment in engaged social innovation plan of study and membership in UI honors program in good standing. Same as INTD:3250.

HONR:3994 Honors Research Practicum 1-3 s.h.

Individual research performed in conjunction with a faculty member's research.

HONR:4990 Honors Thesis or Project 1-3 s.h.

Culminating project of research or artistic creation; preparation and completion of the final product associated with graduation with honors in the student's major. Requirements: member of the University of Iowa Honors Program and junior or senior standing.