

# University of Iowa Honors Program

## Director

- Shaun P. Vecera

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

The University of Iowa Honors Program's general objective is to enrich the undergraduate experience by cultivating intellectual curiosity, promoting engaged, active learning, and developing students' self-efficacy. Central to this enrichment is the honors community fostered by the program, which facilitates connections to faculty mentoring and with peers through engaging coursework, co-curricular involvement, and experiential learning.

Honors at Iowa gives students the space and opportunities to make connections and develop self-authorship through self-discovery. For example, honors students have the opportunity to form closer connections with their academically like-minded and motivated peers as well as their professors on campus. Such networks and working relationships can change careers and lives through mutual discovery. Honors courses create spaces for students to get more from their courses, their faculty, their peers, and their time, and in turn more from themselves. This establishes a network that feeds into and optimizes the students' four-year experience.

## Connections and Networks

Many students choose to participate in Honors Primetime, a unique program that kicks off the fall semester for new honors students. This multi-day in-depth experience fosters lasting connections and sets an example for learning by doing in-depth inquiry.

In the first year, honors students take HONR:1000 Introduction to Honors, which further connects them to other honors students, the honors building facilities, and honors faculty and staff. In this course, students learn about the opportunities and privileges afforded to them by their continued participation in honors.

First-year students also enroll in a 3-4 s.h. honors course in their first semester. Honors students may additionally opt to take a first-year seminar. Students should try to continually enroll in at least one honors course each semester until 12 s.h. of honors coursework is complete. Students may take as many additional honors courses as they wish.

The UI Honors Program places a strong emphasis on experiential learning (learning by doing), which comprises half the program's curricular requirements. Experiential learning takes the form of undergraduate research, study abroad, internships, teaching practica, being an honors ambassador or an Honors Writing Fellow (or both), and other opportunities. Learning by doing, besides being the most effective way of acquiring knowledge, also helps with self-discovery.

In general, students who are serious about their education and about making a meaningful contribution to the world with their particular capabilities and gifts can be assured that the University of Iowa Honors Program will help them in their journey.

## Unique Honors Academic Activities

### Honors Outreach Ambassadors

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

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

### The Iowa Policy Research Organization

This organization selects 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 and Internships

These opportunities with a reflective component or embedded project enable students to earn honors academic credit for their experience.

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 honors students.

- Honors newsletters, which are written by honors student editors, inform readers on and beyond the campus about honors at the University of Iowa.
- Honors student staff earn pay by staffing the UI Honors Program reception area and other duties as assigned.
- Honors Peer Mentors earn pay by mentoring honors students.
- The Presidential Scholars Program (PSP) engages recipients of the Presidential Fellowship in shared classes, opportunities for prestigious fellowships, and unique programming. Presidential Fellows participate in events with faculty and key administrators, scholarship and fellowship mentoring programs, and volunteer projects.

To learn more, visit Opportunities on the honors program website.