

HANDBOOK

STETSON UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM
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Description and Purpose of the University Honors Program

Stetson's University Honors Program graduated its first class in 1957, making it one of the oldest in the Southeast. It aims to serve accomplished students with an unusual commitment to scholarship and autonomous learning, producing a community of promising and thoughtful scholars who are prepared and competitive for national fellowships and grants, graduate and professional scholarships, and career opportunities.

The Honors Program curriculum replaces the general education requirements with courses and experiences that emphasize self-directed and experiential learning. In designing the curriculum, faculty and students agreed on the following priorities that shaped the program's unique curriculum:

- The Honors curriculum calls on both students and faculty members to conceive of themselves as members of an interdisciplinary community committed to integrated ways of thinking and learning.
- The Honors curriculum seeks to foster scholarly and creative work that is abundantly supported by faculty and staff mentors at Stetson, but that is ultimately independent and student-driven.
- The Honors curriculum encourages introspection and self-discovery through the Credo Project and active participation in scholarly and community affairs.
- The Honors curriculum embraces the idea that education occurs inside and outside the classroom.

In addition to their general education within the Program, students elect a major field for concentrated study. A number of them pursue a minor and in some cases a second major as well.

Honors education does not consist only of certain classes and assignments. Honors education is a commitment of interested professors and select students united by their common interest in intellectual adventure.

Admission Requirements and Procedures

Admission to the University Honors Program requires special application to the University Honors Program Executive Committee. In general, Honors students will have graduated within the top 10% of their secondary school classes and have combined SAT scores exceeding 1300, with Verbal scores above 600. However, at the discretion of the admissions committee, these requirements may be waived.

Graduation Requirements

Students in the Honors Program have a distinct grade audit. Details are available in the Advising Matters section of the Stetson website, or here. Additional proficiencies and/or courses:

- Additional proficiencies and/or courses from the regular undergraduate curriculum as required by the student's respective college for the degree being sought.
- Final overall GPA of 3.0 or better to graduate within the University Honors Program.

Honors Course Equivalencies

To graduate, a student must fulfill the specific course requirements for his or her college and major. For students who do not complete the program, Honors courses and experiences will be converted to non-Honors courses. The Freshman and Junior Seminars will fulfill the required Freshman and Junior Seminar courses for all degrees. The Honors Project and the Honors Workshop will be awarded elective credit. The Honors Tutorial will be assigned an appropriate course equivalency, based on the content and methodology of the Tutorial taken.

Privileges and Opportunities

Honors students may exercise the following special privileges, subject to approval of the Executive Committee.

A. Honors Stipends

Every student admitted into the program will have up a personal research and travel budget. These funds will be available for use only after the student completes the initial four-course (two-year) sequence of Honors classes. The funds can be used during the students' third and fourth year for activities such as:

- Study abroad (up to a thousand dollars for airfare)
- Research, scholarship, and artistic activities related to Senior Research
- International and domestic service opportunities
- Research presentation at regional, national and international conferences
- Expenses during **unpaid** business, governmental and NGO summer internships

More information is [available on the web](#). The stipend application criteria and process is available [here](#).

B. Self-defined Major

Students may design a personalized major which is different from any of the existing majors defined by the University Catalog. Proposals for self-defined majors are submitted to the Honors Executive Committee for review and approval. Among the criteria by which the Committee evaluates proposals are these: (a) Is the proposed major at least equivalent to existing majors in respect to depth and substance? (b) Has the proposal been reviewed by one or more professors in each of the departments most heavily involved? (c) Can the students provide a cogent explanation of why the existing majors will not meet their needs, while the proposed major will?

C. Honors Living

Honors students may elect to live in a section of the residence halls set aside especially for them. They are not required to do so.

Standards for Student Progress

D. Good Standing in the University Honors Program

A student who meets the following criteria will be considered to be making acceptable progress toward graduation in Honors and will remain in good standing. Otherwise the student will be placed on Honors Probation. The criteria are that the student has:

- Made adequate progress towards completing the Honors Curriculum. At a minimum, a student should have completed Honors 1 and Honors 2 by the end of his/her first year; Honors 3 and Honors 4 by the end of his/her third year.
- Maintained a minimum overall GPA at or above the level specified by the Honors Council.
- Maintained a minimum Honors GPA at or above the level specified by the Honors Council.

Note: If unavoidable circumstances prevent enrolling in an Honors class, students may request, in writing, that the Executive Committee not place them on Honors Probation.

Note: The current minimum overall GPAs are 2.6 after the second semester at Stetson, 2.7 after the third, 2.8 after the fourth, 2.9 after the fifth, 3.0 after the sixth.

E. Honors Probation

Under certain circumstances, the Honors Executive Committee will designate students as being on Honors Probation. A student with this status is still an Honors student, but may not exercise the Options or be elected to the Honors Council. Honors Probation is not a form of punishment and is a temporary status that normally lasts for one semester. No permanent record of this status is kept. Students might be given this status if they are not maintaining acceptable progress toward graduation in Honors.

Honors Courses & Experiences

The several half-unit courses in the Honors curriculum are designed to be taken in addition to a typical three- or four-unit load. Students in the Honors Program typically take between 3.5 units and 4.5 units per semester over their eight-semester career at Stetson. To graduate, students must fulfill 32 units, and fulfill the Honors Program requirements and major requirements, as indicated on their grade audits.

HON101 Honors First-Year Seminar “Enduring Questions” (1 unit). The seminar undertakes a critical comparative study of an important and enduring question, chosen by the Honors Program students and faculty every three to five years. Texts from across disciplines (the natural sciences, the humanities, the fine arts, and the social sciences) will be used to present ideas that have had significant impact on the present. The course includes experiential components that will integrate philosophy, religion, politics, literature and art. Students plan their Honors Project for spring semester, and begin work on Credos and their proposals for the Honors Stipend. It is taught by professors from different academic disciplines. [Must be taken in the fall of a student’s first year.]

HON102 Honors Project (.5). Students complete the scholarly, creative, or community-service projects designed in HON101. Students present their projects at SURCAS. Prerequisite: HON101. **A half-unit course.** [Must be taken in the spring of a student’s first year.]

HON201 Honors Workshop (.5). This course focuses on the generation of three texts: Students will refine their Credos, submit a proposal for their Honors Stipend, and create a group syllabus for the Honors Tutorial (HON202). Prerequisite: HON102. **A half-unit course.** [Must be taken in the fall of a student’s second year.]

HON202 Honors Tutorials (.5). Small group, student-designed interdisciplinary seminars, led by university faculty members. Prerequisite: HON201. **A half-unit course.** [Must be taken in the spring of a student’s second year.]

HON301 Honors Junior Seminar (1). In their junior or senior year, students participate in a seminar that focuses on the question: “What does it mean to lead a life that matters?” The seminar is coordinated with the major lecture series on campus (e.g., Values Council

Lecture Series, Howard Thurman Lecture Series, Lawson Lecture Series, Woodrow Wilson Fellows Lectures). The seminar prepares students for their Honors Oral Exam with Stetson faculty by further developing the Credo. [Typically taken in the spring of a student's third year.]

HON395 Teaching Apprenticeship (.5). May be taken twice. Graded as P/F.

HON401, 402 Best Books Club (0). Modeled after Stetson's Book Feasts, the Best Books Club will meet twice a semester to discuss books chosen by the graduating Honors cohort. Required of all seniors, but open to all Honors students. A faculty member will coordinate these meetings, and when possible and appropriate, community members or visiting scholars and experts will join the discussion. **A zero-credit, ungraded course.** [Students typically participate during their fourth or final year on campus.]

HON499 Honors Oral Examination and Credo Presentation (0). Required for all students during the semester immediately before graduation. Graded as P/F.

Governance of the University Honors Program

F. Honors Council

The Honors Council establishes all policies for the University Honors Program subject to review by the Council of Deans and subject to the limitations the University bylaws.

Membership

Faculty members elected by their respective division or school serve for two years. (Staggered terms allow for continuity from year to year.)

College of Arts and Sciences

Education Division one representative
Humanities Division one representative
Natural Sciences Division..... one representative
Social Sciences Division one representative

School of Business one representative

School of Music..... one representative

Faculty members who coordinate the Honors Courses serve for four semesters: the two semesters preceding their course, the one during the course, and the one following the course. University Honors Program students in good standing elected by Honors students of their respective academic classes serve for one year:

Fourth-year Class one representative
Third-year Class one representative

Second-year Class one representative
First-year Class one representative

(The Honors Director serves as an ex-officio (non-voting) member.)

Functions

- It serves as the curriculum committee for the University Honors Program.
- It establishes the standards for admission into, and retention in, the University Honors Program.
- It establishes requirements for completion of the Honors curriculum and graduation in the University Honors Program subject to the limitations of the bylaws of the University.
- It defines the functions of the University Honors Program Director.
- It defines the structure and function of the Executive Committee.
- It cooperates with individual schools and departments in developing and administering the Honors curriculum.
- It conducts business when a quorum of 40% of membership is present at duly called meetings.

Reports

The council reports its actions as follows:

- It sends the minutes of its meetings to the Council of Deans.
- It communicates actions taken in respect to its curriculum to the Chairpersons of the Curriculum committees of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Schools of Business and Music.
- Its members apprise their respective constituents of pertinent action pending or taken.

G. Honors Executive Committee:

Role

The Honors Executive Committee implements the policies of the Honors Council and takes such other actions as it is directed to take by the Honors Council.

Membership

The membership of the Committee is constituted as follows:

- The Honors Director is a permanent member and serves as the Committee's Chairperson. The Director casts a vote on motions only to break a tie.
- Additional members are appointed from the Honors Council membership by the Honors Council Director and include four to six faculty members and two student members, typically but not necessarily the sophomore and senior representatives.

Functions

- The functions of the Executive Committee include but are not limited to the following:
- It considers and acts on applications of students for admission into the University Honors Program.
- It reviews the academic progress of Honors students, and if it deems appropriate places them on probation or dismisses them from the program.
- It certifies completion of requirements for graduation in the University Honors Program.
- It reviews and takes action on petitions from individual Honors students, including but not restricted to granting waivers or substitutions for University Honors Program requirements and approving self-defined majors.

Reports

The Executive Committee reports its actions by submitting official minutes of all its meetings to the University Honors Program Council.

H. University Honors Program Director

Role

The University Honors Program Director carries out the regular functions defined by the University Honors Program Council and such additional tasks as may be assigned by the Council or the Executive Committee.

Appointment

The University Honors Program Director is appointed for a three-year renewable term by the Dean of Arts and Sciences on recommendation of the Honors Council.

Functions

The functions of the University Honors Program Director include the following:

- The University Honors Program Director or his or her designee calls the Council into session at least once each semester, giving due notice of meeting date and agenda, and then presides at its meetings.
- Works with the University Honors Program students in such ways as the following: recruiting them for the Program, advising them on academic matters, and serving as a liaison between the University Honors Program and the governing committees and University administration.
- Maintains records and files reports necessary to the operation of the Program, including the following: student profiles and records of progress; budget request and

reports; minutes of meeting of the Council and Executive Committee; and the Annual Report, submitted to the Dean of Arts and Sciences, with copies to the Provost and the Deans of Business and Music.

- Fulfills regular administrative tasks necessary to the operation of the Program, including the following: recruiting faculty and arranging schedules for Honors classes; supervising the election of student representatives to the Council; scheduling Honors orals; supervising the budget of the University Honors Program; maintaining the description of the University Honors Program in the Bulletin; and sitting as a member of the Committee of the Department Heads of the College of Arts and Sciences.
- Maintains the Handbook of the University Honors Program, which delineates:
 1. Admission Requirements and Procedures
 2. Graduation Requirements
 3. Privileges of Participation
 4. Standards of Student Progress
 5. Curriculum

Reports

The Honors Director reports his or her actions through periodic briefings as requested by the Honors Council or Executive Committee and through the Annual Report and Budget Report, which are reviewed by the Honors Council and submitted to the Provost.