

UPDATE: MOU BETWEEN HONORS AND GEOC/SENATE C&C

The attached proposal was approved by the Honors Board, the General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC), and the University Senate's Curricula and Courses Committee (Senate C&C) at the end of the 2015-16 academic year.

In brief, it recognizes that membership in the Honors Program may be used as a prerequisite for any course—including those holding general education designations—and that this prerequisite is implemented in StudentAdmin through the use of reserve caps. Like other prerequisites, it may be overridden with the consent of the course instructor.

The proposal includes updated catalog language for courses that exist only as Honors (with or without an Honors equivalent). For new course proposals, this language will be enforced by GEOC and/or Senate C&C. Honors has agreed to reach out to departments and encourage them to bring existing courses into alignment with the new language.

- AH/NUSC 1030. Interdisciplinary Approach to Obesity Prevention
- AMST 1700. Honors Core: American Landscapes
- ANTH 2400. Honors Core: Analyzing Religion
- BME/CSE/MCB/PNB 1401. Honors Core: Computational Molecular Biology
- DRAM 2134. Honors Core: Analyzing Sports as Performance
- ECON 1107. Honors Core: Economics, Nature, and the Environment
- ENGR 2243. Nanoscience and Society
- GSCI 1055. Geoscience and the American Landscape
- HIST/LLAS 1570. Migrant Workers in Connecticut
- MCB 1405. Honors Core: The Genetics Revolution in Contemporary Culture
- MUSI 1005. Honors Core: Music and Nature, Music and the Environment
- POLS 2062. Privacy in the Information Age

Proposals for Honors Courses with General Education Designations

Prepared by Jaclyn Chancey (Assistant Director for Curriculum, Assessment, and Planning, Honors Program) on March 16, 2016, on behalf of the following working group: James Chrobak (PSYC, Honors Board); Michael Darre (ANSC, Senate C&C); Dean Hanink (GEOG, Senate C&C, Honors Board); Virginia Hettinger (POLS, Honors Board); Stephanie Milan (PSYC, GEOC); Olivier Morand (ECON, GEOC); and Richard Watnick (MATH, Stamford campus, Honors Board).

Background

Students in the UConn Honors Program curriculum pursue Sophomore Honors in their first two years and dedicate their second two years to Honors in their majors. Overall, Honors credits are expected to account for 20-25% of an Honors student's undergraduate curriculum; this is in keeping with professional standards for honors programs.¹ Honors classes carrying general education designations (content areas 1-4 as well as competencies Q and W) are an important component of the Honors curriculum:

- To earn Sophomore Honors, students must earn at least 3 Honors credits in an interdisciplinary Honors Core course approved by the Honors Board. As shown in the Appendix, many but not all of these courses carry general education designations. Some Honors Core courses were created for this program, while others are Honors variants of existing courses.
- Students must earn 12-15 additional Honors credits for Sophomore Honors. They are encouraged to do so in general education (including Q) and pre-major courses offered by academic departments.
- Most of the credits students apply to Honors in the Major do not hold general education designations. However, many departmental thesis courses carry the W designation.

In the 2015-2016 academic year, 2,294 students enrolled in Honors courses carrying general education designations. Most of these enrollments (1,636 or 71.3%) were in courses with at least one content area (1-4) designation. Relatively few (299 or 13.0%) were in upper-level W courses. Of all enrollments in Honors general education courses, 2,127 (92.7%) were students in the Honors Program.

When a course is offered for Honors credit, all students are held to the same heightened expectations. Therefore, any enrolled student—regardless of membership in the Honors Program—who earns a B- or better in the course is awarded Honors credit that appears on the transcript.

Policy

Honors courses are intended to provide accelerated and challenging learning opportunities for high achieving students. Membership in the Honors Program is one way in which undergraduates demonstrate their ability and willingness to engage in this additional challenge. As such, this policy affirms:

- Membership in the Honors Program may serve as a pre-requisite for enrollment in Honors classes, including those that hold general education designations.
- This pre-requisite is implemented in Student Administration via the Honors reserve capacity.

¹ National Collegiate Honors Council. (2014, June 19). *Basic characteristics of a fully developed honors program*. Retrieved from <http://nchchonors.org/faculty-directors/basic-characteristics-of-a-fully-developed-honors-program/>

- Instructors of Honors courses are encouraged to issue permission numbers to non-Honors students whom they deem qualified.

Honors courses may be divided into three categories. Each is described below along with information about catalog copy and scheduling that will apply to courses with general education designations.

1. Honors course with same course number and title as non-honors version.

Departments may choose to offer an Honors variant of any course in a given semester. This does not change the catalog copy, nor does it commit the department to future Honors offerings.

Departments should ensure that an Honors variant of a general education course in this category does not replace the non-honors version. The non-honors version should be taught at least as frequently as the Honors variant; they may be taught in the same semester, alternating semesters, or alternating years.

- Course catalog copy does not refer to Honors
- Only Honors sections are given Honors grading basis
- Honors sections usually have all seats reserved for Honors students²
- Recommended scheduling note: “Open to students in the Honors Program; others by consent of instructor.”

2. Honors course with different number and title from equivalent non-honors course.

Some departments have created separate course numbers and titles for their Honors courses. This is often the case for courses in a sequence, as it allows for the enforcement of pre-requisites. (For example, a student who took non-honors CHEM 1127Q would need permission to take Honors CHEM 1148Q.)

- Course catalog copy may refer to Honors in the title, description, or both. If the word Honors is not used in the title, the course should be distinguished from the non-honors equivalent in some way (ex: “Advanced” Calculus).
- Recommended catalog copy: “Prerequisite: Open to students in the Honors Program; others by consent of instructor.”
- Honors grading basis is applied at the course level
- All seats reserved for Honors students¹

3. Honors course with no non-honors equivalent.

These classes were developed expressly for an Honors population. They incorporate content and pedagogy appropriate for the motivation, ambition, and high academic abilities of Honors students. They capitalize on the fact that Honors students can accelerate their learning and, thus, the classes may incorporate innovative content that goes beyond any one non-honors course. Some of these classes were designed as interdisciplinary Honors Core courses, while others support advanced Honors research or thesis writing in the major.

- Course catalog copy may refer to Honors (or “Honors Core” if appropriate) in the title, description, or both

¹ The Student Administration system uses the Honors reserve cap to accomplish the prerequisite. The Honors Program encourages the use of instructor consent for students not in Honors and does not limit it in any way.

- Recommended catalog copy: “Prerequisite: Open to students in the Honors Program; others by consent of instructor.”
- Honors grading basis is applied at the course level
- All seats reserved for Honors students¹

Implementation

This policy will hold for all proposals for Honors courses with general education designations beginning in Fall 2016. Since the Honors Program is not part of the Curricula Action Request Workflow, Honors staff members will advise departments of these guidelines and GEOC will apply them.

Departments retain responsibility for scheduling and staffing of all courses. Honors staff will inform departments of these guidelines, such as which courses are required to alternate between Honors and non-honors versions.

In Fall 2016, Honors staff will begin working with individual departments and colleges and asking them to update pre-existing courses to bring them into alignment with this policy, thus promoting consistency across the catalog.

¹ The Student Administration system uses the Honors reserve cap to accomplish the prerequisite. The Honors Program encourages the use of instructor consent for students not in Honors and does not limit it in any way.

Appendix: Approved Honors Core Courses

The following catalog courses have been approved by the Honors Board as part of the interdisciplinary Honors Core Curriculum.

Course Number and Title	GEOC	Type*	Honors Last Offered
AH/NUSC 1030. Interdisciplinary Approach to Obesity Prevention	CA 3	3	Spring 2016 (as AH 1030)
AMST 1700. Honors Core: American Landscapes	CA 1	3	Fall 2016
ANTH 1001W. Anthropology through Film	CA 1, CA 4-Int, W	1	Spring 2015
ANTH 2400. Honors Core: Analyzing Religion	CA 2, CA 4-Int	3	Spring 2016
ART 2410. Basic Studio, Photography	-	1	Fall 2014
BME/CSE/MCB/PNB 1401. Honors Core: Computational Molecular Biology	CA 3	3	Spring 2014
CLCS 1002. Reading Between the Arts	CA 1	1	Spring 2016
DRAM 2134. Honors Core: Analyzing Sports as Performance	CA 1	3	Spring 2016
ECON 1107. Honors Core: Economics, Nature, and the Environment	CA 2	2	Spring 2016
ECON 1108. Game Theory in the Natural and Social Sciences	CA 2	1	Fall 2016
ENGR 2243. Nanoscience and Society	-	3	Spring 2016
GSCI 1055. Geoscience and the American Landscape	CA 3	2	Fall 2015 (as SCI 1051)
HDFS 1060. Close Relationships Across the Lifespan	CA 2	1	Summer 2016
HEJS 1103. Literature and Civilization of the Jewish People	CA 1, CA 4	1	Spring 2016
HIST/LLAS 1570. Migrant Workers in Connecticut	CA 1, CA 4	3	Fall 2016
HRTS/SOCI 3835. Refugees and Humanitarianism	-	1	Spring 2016
MCB 1405. Honors Core: The Genetics Revolution in Contemporary Culture	CA 3	3	Fall 2015
MUSI 1005. Honors Core: Music and Nature, Music and the Environment	CA 1	3	Spring 2013
POLS 2062. Privacy in the Information Age	†	2	Fall 2016
POLS 3023. Politics and Literature	-	1	Spring 2016
POLS 3208/W. Politics of Oil	CA 2, (W)	1	Fall 2016
POLS/WGSS 3247. Gender and War	-	1	Fall 2016
POLS 3412. Global Environmental Politics	-	1	Spring 2014
PSYC 2110. Psychology of Human Sexuality	-	1	Spring 2011
SOCI 1701. Society in Global Perspective	CA 4-Int	1	Spring 2016
SOCI 2509W. Sociology of Anti-Semitism	CA 4-Int, W	1	Fall 2016
SOCI 3823. The Sociology of Law: Global and Comparative Perspectives	CA 2, CA 4-Int	1	Fall 2016
WGSS 1104. Feminisms and the Arts	CA 1, CA 4	1	Fall 2014
WGSS 2105/W. Gender and Science	CA 4-Int, (W)	1	Spring 2016

* Course type as defined in policy.

1. Honors course with same course number and title as non-honors version.
2. Honors course with different number and title from equivalent non-honors course.
3. Honors course with no non-honors equivalent.

† POLS 2062 is Honors at the catalog level and does not carry general education designations. POLS 2062W is the non-Honors version.