

Orientation Video 2018-2

[00:00:00.69] The Honors Program requirements, and the core philosophy of explore, create, lead, draw on the research of Dr. Joseph Renzulli, a scholar of gifted education at UConn. According to Dr. Renzulli, gifted behaviors are the result of above average ability, task commitment, and creativity. Broad exposure to ideas, skill building, and ultimately sharing unique creations with an authentic audience encourages students to develop creative productivity. And as your creative productivity grows, you'll develop the characteristics to become a positive change maker in our community and in the world at large.

[00:00:46.35] To graduate from UConn Honors, you will need to meet curricular and co-curricular requirements. On the curricular side, you will take at least 30 Honors credits, fulfilled in one of three ways. You may take a course labeled as Honors. You may convert a non-Honors course to Honors by working with your professor to engage in Honors level work. Or you may take a graduate level class while still an undergraduate.

[00:01:15.26] Your Honors coursework will be distributed across subject areas and levels. At least three of your Honors credits must come from an Honors core course. These interdisciplinary courses are specifically designed for Honors students. They are smaller in size, so you'll be pushed to actively engage in critical thinking and discussion while approaching a topic from a unique perspective.

[00:01:40.07] What I like to do is curate conversations and get students talking to each other. Because in the class I teach for the Honors core-- I am not a sports guru. I don't pretend to be the champion of all things sports related. That would be just outside my scope of specialty.

[00:01:58.85] But what I do bring is a skill set in theater studies and performance studies. And I wanted to integrate that critical methodology into a much broader discipline, and so my classes invite conversation and dialogue, hopefully champion debate.

[00:02:15.80] Honors core is fantastic. So let me tell you about my Honors core. I am a STEM major, and I don't know why, but in my sophomore year, I was looking through all the Honors core options and something drew me to the Sociology of Anti-Semitism, which is crazy. I never thought I'd be in a class like that, ever.

[00:02:36.32] The professor was phenomenal, and it was three hours on a Wednesday night, and it was late, but he was so great, and it just really opened my eyes to having a broader, more worldly perspective, and I think it was that course that really showed me, wow, there's a lot more in the world that I need to see, that I can understand, that's right at my fingertips. So it was really the course that kind of jump started my exploration.

[00:03:04.82] The Honors Program believes that your education benefits from co-curricular activities as well, such as engagement in your major field.

[00:03:13.44] Meet with a teacher. You can decide to do a presentation-- maybe it's a research project-- something that you're passionate about. It might be going to a conference and bringing

back important pieces of information, and sharing that with your class. It could be going to a summit. I mean, it really could be anything.

[00:03:31.92] You'll also take part in academic enrichment, which means that you will get involved in an activity that has an academic component and results in a creative product that you will share with a real audience.

[00:03:44.90] In my freshman year, I applied to the Holster Scholars Program, which gives you a grant over the summer to do your own original research. And I had had a project back in high school that I really wanted to work in in a real laboratory, because I just did it in my basement.

[00:04:01.91] And I applied through that. It's only open to Honors students. So I applied and I took a course, where they prepped you and allowed you to make a good application.

[00:04:12.14] And then that summer, I worked on a medical device. It's a micro tracheal implant that, when implanted in the lungs, can generate electricity. And you can use that electricity to power a pacemaker, so you can get rid of that lead battery.

[00:04:27.93] I worked with a student on an independent study, as an Honors independent study, in one of my classes on African American theater. And he, as his final paper, had written something that was really compelling, and I suggested that he submit it to a student essay contest that I was aware of.

[00:04:45.30] And so we continued to work on the paper outside the scope of the class. And one of the goals he wanted to do was to get it published. And so he won first place in the contest.

[00:04:56.42] He was invited and flown in to the conference. He gave a speech. And they ultimately helped him publish his paper.

[00:05:04.64] Additionally, you will be involved in leadership. Many Honors students have engaged in leadership activities in high school, but this requirement asks you to do more than become a member of a club's executive board. At UConn, you will engage in intentional reflection to identify a specific need in a community in which you are involved. Then, you'll create and implement a plan to positively impact your community.

[00:05:31.55] The biggest takeaway from the Health of Communities would have to be just the importance of serving under-served communities. And I think that's something that I try to remind myself of every day. It's easy to get caught up in what's going on, how many things you have to do,

[00:05:47.50] but when it all comes down to it, we-- as health care providers or whatever field you go into-- we're here to better the earth, to further our planet, and just provide care for everybody else. It's not just about me, it's about what can I do to help everybody else?

[00:06:04.22] Finally, you will attend 10 events from certain categories. These events will allow you to explore new ideas and learn new information. You'll ask questions of guest lecturers, tour

insect collections for the first time, and participate in conversations. These may be landmarks on your scholarly journey and help you find options you didn't know existed.

[00:06:28.69] Ultimately, you will produce a thesis, marking your arrival as a true producer of knowledge in your field. Your explorations will have helped you to hone in on an area of research that intrigues you and poses questions that you want to answer. This is your contribution to the body of knowledge in your field.

[00:06:48.72] So my novel looks at mental illness in women. In particular, the ways that women exhibit mental illness. And so I'm looking at the differences and similarities in how these women act and how that ends up getting them diagnosed with these various diseases.

[00:07:08.29] The great thing about the Honors thesis is each one is different. The Honors Program makes it possible for Honors thesis projects to take very different forms. So I've worked with students who have written a traditional research paper-- a long paper of 40 or 50 pages with footnotes and citations and research within the literature of the field. But I've also worked on Honors thesis projects where it's taken the form of a video or of motion graphics animation.

[00:07:40.27] The opportunities afforded by the Honors Program carry responsibilities. To remain in Honors, you must do three things. First, take UNIV 1784 the first semester of your first year.

[00:07:54.79] My very first semester, I took a UNIV course that we all have to take. And from there, I learned about undergraduate research, which was my goal when I came to UConn, because I'm so in love with research. So from there, I was able to meet Dr. Caroline McGuire. And she set me up with becoming a Holster Scholar and getting involved in undergraduate research.

[00:08:16.64] Second, earn at least six Honors credits per academic year. And third, maintain a certain cumulative GPA. At the end of your first year, you need at least a 3.0 to remain in the program. No matter what year you are, you need at least a 3.4 to be considered to be in good standing.

[00:08:36.67] It may feel like a lot to take in, but you will have plenty of support along the way.