

Honors Program Requirements

What to know as you prepare to register for your courses.

At a glance:

- Rising Seniors:
 - You should have completed nearly all the requirements for the honors degree.
 - If you are currently enrolled in HONR 449H, you should plan to enroll in HONR 451H and HONR 450H or an approved departmental substitute. If you are using a departmental substitute, make sure to contract it for honors credit!
 - If you are not enrolled in HONR449H or have not already taken it, make sure to add that to your schedule for the Fall.
 - You should have completed or have a plan to complete your [service-learning project and essay](#). Summer is a great time to do meaningful service to your community.
 - You should have completed ~18 hours of honors coursework and earned a B or better in each of those courses.
 - You should have completed at least one honors symposium course or plan on enrolling in one of the three offered next semester. See page 3.
 - Make sure your schedule allows you to earn the required 24 credit hours of honors courses with at least 6 credit hours in your major discipline. If you need to contract courses, note that they are due on **August 29th**.

- Rising Juniors:
 - By the end of this spring semester, you should have a minimum of 12 honors credit hours with a grade of B or better.
 - You should have completed HMXP102H and CRTW201H.
 - You should have completed at least one honors symposium course or plan on enrolling in one of the three offered next semester. See below.
 - You should talk with your academic advisor about the best time to complete your honors thesis. If junior year is the best time, you should enroll in HONR 449H
 - If you have not already completed your [service-learning project](#), it would be a good idea to get on your radar. Summer is a great time to do meaningful service to your community.
 - Make sure you have at least one honors course in your plans for next semester. You may need to contract this course (see below). **Contracts are due on August 29th!**

- Rising Sophomores:
 - By the end of the spring semester, you should have a minimum of 7 honors credit hours with a grade of B or better.
 - You should have completed HMXP102H.
 - If you have not completed CRTW201H, make sure to include it in your Fall semester course plan.
 - If you have not already completed your [service-learning project](#), it would be a good idea to get on your radar. Summer is a great time to do meaningful service to your community.
 - Consider taking an honors symposium course next semester.
 - Make sure you have at least one honors course in your plans for next semester. You may need to contract this course (see below). **Contracts are due on August 29th!**

Honors Program Requirements

A total of **24 credit hours** of honors coursework with a grade of **B or better** and a cumulative **GPA of 3.30** or higher is required to complete an honors degree.

1. General Education Component (6 hours): Honors sections of "The Human Experience: Who Am I?" (HMXP102H) and "Critical Reading, Thinking and Writing" (CRTW201H) for a total of 6 credit hours must be completed.
2. Cultural Component (1-3 hours): One honors symposium must be completed (1 credit hour) or one special topics Honors seminar (3 credit hours).
3. Coursework component (12 hours): Completed 12 credit hours of Honors coursework with a minimum of 6 credit hours in your major and 3 credit hours outside of your major.
4. Independent Study Component (5 hours): This is a two-semester course sequence that helps you prepare to complete a culminating project (HONR449H - 1 credit hour) and complete the project (HONR451H and HONR450H (or approved substitution) – 4 credit hours total).
5. Service-Learning Component: A [service-learning project](#) and a 3–5 page reflection essay must be completed. In some cases, this can be completed as part of coursework.

To be in good standing, students must accumulate the following honors credit hours with a B or better and maintain a GPA of 3.30 or better.

- **Freshmen** should have accumulated 7 honors credit hours by the end of the freshman year
- **Sophomores** should have accumulated 13 honors credit hours by the end of the sophomore year
- **Juniors** should have accumulated 19 or 20 honors credit hours by the end of the junior year
- **Seniors** must have accumulated 24 honors credit hours by the end of the senior year

Students not in good standing will be placed on probation and will be asked to meet with the Dean of the Honors College to identify an action plan. If a student fails to meet with the Dean or does not successfully implement the action plan, the student will be removed from the Honors program and lose perks including early registration.

What counts as an honors course?

1. **Sections of pre-determined honors courses by major.** These courses have honors sections that are regularly offered and do not need any additional effort to count toward our honors coursework.
2. **1-credit honors symposia or 3-credit Honors seminars,** which meet the Cultural Component requirement. Three 1-credit symposia are being offered in the Spring:
 - a. HONR202H (1 CH) – Do Americans Still Need or Want Checks and Balances Within Government?

Brief description: When voters seek changes, should actions and decisions bypass traditional paths requiring review or affirmation by another branch of government? Students in this honors seminar deconstruct the historical context of long held systems of checks and balances established by laws. Through discussion requiring examination of ideas and legal principles from the Constitution, US Supreme Court precedents, areas of accepted preemption by recognized experts, executive powers, the power of the purse, and Congressional oversight, students will be applying this legal framework to present day cultural and social trends. Applying critical thinking skills, assignments will explore what tradeoff Americans may experience if separation of power within our government is redefined. Students present through written and oral presentations what critical factors must be balanced for elected and appointed officials to provide the type of leadership needed to face today and tomorrow's world. Assignments will explore whether challenges and opportunities of today or tomorrow require innovative approaches or properly fit within time proven procedures utilized in the past.

- b. HONR203H (1 CH): The Stories Behind Great American Opera

Brief description: In *The Stories Behind Great American Opera*, students will analyze three important American literary classics and their adaption for the operatic stage: *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, *Porgy* by DuBose Heyward, and *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott. Students will be transported into the unique world of opera and experience the challenges and rewards of setting well-known texts for the stage. Comparing and contrasting the written text and its evolution through the setting of music will continue to be a running theme for discussion and dialogue throughout the course of the semester.

- c. HONR 233H (3 CH): Violence & Nonviolence in Political Movements
(Note: This course also satisfies your Global Perspectives requirement)

Brief description: This seminar deals with the roles that violence and nonviolence play in political movements. Among the topics we'll consider are: What are the various meanings of violence and nonviolence? To what extent does nonviolence differ from pacifism? What are the ethical justifications for political movements using violence? for using nonviolence? Under what circumstances and to what extent is the use of violence effective? is the use of nonviolence effective? Among the movements that we'll study in relation to these questions are: the US civil rights movement, the US movement against abortion, the women's suffrage movement in the US and Great Britain, the US movement against gun control, the worldwide environmental movement, the US movement to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election, and the movements in the US & Israel/Palestine that were related to the wars in Gaza

3. **Contracted honors courses.** In many cases, you'll need to work with your instructor to 'contract' a class for honors credit. In order to do so, you'll need to follow these steps:

- Ask the instructor if they are willing to enter into an honors contract. Most instructors will agree, but it is ultimately their choice.
- Collaborate with the instructor to complete the [Honors Program Contract Form](#).
- Completing the form will trigger a process that asks the instructor and their Department Chair to approve the contract.
- When all approvals are received, a confirmation will be emailed to you and your instructor.

Special considerations to note for honors course contracts:

1. **No honors contracts will be awarded for CRTW201H or HMXP102H.** Make all efforts to fit one of the pre-determined sections into your schedule. If this is not possible, you should plan to take the course during the Fall of 2025.
2. **All Honors contracts must be submitted by the end of the first week of classes (August 29th).** Make sure to be proactive and plan accordingly (submitted does not mean approved – I understand that sometimes instructors and Department Chairs can take some time to approve the form).

The Honors Culminating Experience (the Independent Study Component)

Students must take three courses to complete this requirement:

1. HONR449H: Preparing for the Honors Culminating Experience. This class is designed to help you work through the beginning stages of your project, including finding a mentor, identifying a research or creative project, and developing or reinforcing basic research skills.
2. HONR450H or the appropriate substitute course in your major.
3. HONR451H: Senior Honors Culminating Experiences Seminar. This course is required to be taken concurrently with HONR450H (or approved substitute) as you develop your thesis or complete your culminating project. You should enroll in this class immediately after completing HONR449H.

Honors Service-Learning Requirement

This requirement is composed of two parts: 1. completing the service activity and 2. composing and submitting a reflection essay. More information and the submission form can be found [here](#).

Students typically meet the service activity part of the requirement in one of three ways:

- by taking a course with a service-learning component
- by serving in a community (such as volunteering at a local homeless shelter)
- taking part in Winthrop's day of service, such as Rolling in Rock Hill.

The reflective essay should summarize the experience, consider its value and how it might be improved, and discuss the value of service learning in general.