

Honors College

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Honors education was first organized at the University in 1965 as an Honors Program, and in 1971 was named in honor of George R. Olliphant. The Honors College, established in 1976, includes the George R. Olliphant Honors Program, providing students of superior academic ability with a broadly based undergraduate education. Its aim is to identify, encourage, and reward academic excellence in all fields and to serve students with varying academic interests. In many respects, the education offered through the Honors College may best be described as that of a small liberal arts college set within a large comprehensive university, with students encouraged to draw freely from both the College and the University. Students in the Honors College have access to small Honors classes, outstanding professors, special scholarships, and opportunities for independent study and special activities.

The curriculum of the Honors College consists of two phases: the General Honors Program for freshmen and sophomores and the Senior Honors Program for juniors and seniors. To enter the College as freshmen, students compete with other applicants on the basis of high school grades, scores on the American College Test (or Scholastic Aptitude Test), detailed evaluations by two high school teachers and their principal or guidance counselor, and an essay. Students may also be asked to come to the campus for a personal interview. Successful completion of General Honors will be cited on the student's transcript and diploma. The Senior Honors Program is described below.

Following is a brief description of the Honors College requirements and curriculum. For more specific details, students and advisers are urged to consult the *Honors College Handbook*, which is available on the Web at www.honors.usm.edu.

General Honors

Freshmen admitted to General Honors complete the curriculum listed below. In satisfying the General Honors requirements, students thereby fulfill the University General Education requirements. For most students, completion of General Honors will also fulfill the core requirements of their majors. Some students, however, may have to take additional core courses required specifically for their major. Students undertaking General Honors are required to complete at least 26 hours in Honors courses and departmental Honors sections, taking six or more hours of Honors course work each semester. Students are in good standing as long as they remain on track and maintain a minimal 3.0 overall average; they must graduate with at least a 3.0 average in order to receive General Honors recognition at graduation.



Honors College General Education Requirements

	HOURS
I. Reasoning and Communication Skills	
ENG 101, 102	6
Required: 6 hours in Honors sections.	
Mathematics	3
Required: 102, 167, 178, 312, or 314.	
Communications	3
Required: SCM 111, 305, 320 or 330, preferably in Honors sections as offered.	
University Forum: Honors 321, 322	2-4
Recommended: 4 hours. Required: 2 hours.	
II. Humanities and Fine Arts	
Fine Arts	3-6
Recommended: 6 hours total in ART 130, DAN 107, MUS 365, THE 100, or other upper level fine arts history or appreciation courses, preferably in Honors sections as offered. Required: 3 hours.	
World Literature, History and Philosophy	12
Required: 12 hours total in Honors 111, 112, 211, 212 (Honors Colloquium: World Thought and Culture). These courses replace HIS 101, 102; ENG 203; and PHI 151 or a Humanities/free elective.	
Foreign Language	0-12
Recommended: second-year proficiency. Required: either two years of a single language in high school with GPA of B or better or 6 hours university credit.	

III. Social and Behavioral Sciences

Recommended: 9 hours total, in Honors sections as offered, with no more than 3 hours from any one discipline, in ANT 101, 221; GHY 101, 102, 331, 341; PS 101, 220, 331, 425; SOC 101, 240, 314; ECO 200, 201; PSY 110, 375.
 Required: 6 hours6-9

IV. Natural and Applied Sciences

Laboratory Sciences8
 Required: 8 hours total. Recommended: Honors Biology 110/110L; 111/111L; Honors Chemistry 106/106L; 107/107L; or other Honors sections as offered. See list of laboratory sciences in General Education Curriculum.
 Elective. Required: 3 hours total, preferably in Honors sections as offered. See Category IV electives (including mathematics) in General Education Curriculum.....3

V. Human Wellness

Required:
 Food and Nutrition, NFS 167, preferably in Honors sections1
 Health and Physical Fitness, HPR 105, preferably in Honors sections1

Total 48-68

Note: The recommended core is 57-68 hours; the minimum core, however, is 48 hours, 26 of which must be taken in Honors courses and departmental Honors sections. Honors College students may also have to take additional core courses required specifically for their major.

Requirements for Graduation with General Honors

1. Completion of Honors College General Education minimum requirements
2. Completion of a minimum of 26 of the General Education hours in Honors courses and departmental Honors sections
3. Overall minimal GPA of 3.0 at graduation

Typical Schedule for Meeting General Honors Requirements in the First Two Years

Freshman Year	Sem. Hrs.	Sophomore Year	Sem. Hrs.
ENG 101, 102	6	Communications.....	3
Fine Arts	3	Foreign Language.....	0-6
NFS 167	1	HON 211, 212	6
Foreign Language.....	0-6	HON 321, 322	0-2
HON 111, 112	6	HPR 105	1
HON 321, 322	1-2	Laboratory Science	4
Laboratory Science	4	Mathematics/Science Elective	3
MAT 102, 167, 178, 312, or 314	3-5	Social Science	3
Social Science	3		
	<u>27-36</u>		<u>20-28</u>

Senior Honors

To enter Senior Honors, the student must either complete General Honors with a minimum GPA of 3.0 or meet the following admission requirements: (1) a grade point average of 3.5 on at least 40 hours, (2) recommendations from two professors, (3) an essay, and (4) approval by the student's major department. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.25 to remain in Senior Honors. Those students entering from General Honors with a 3.0 GPA will have until the end of the first semester of their junior year to raise their GPA to 3.25. Students completing Senior Honors with the required GPA will receive the special recognition denoted by the Latin designations *summa cum laude* (3.8 or higher overall average), *magna cum laude* (3.50-3.79), or *cum laude* (3.25-3.49). Students will typically apply for Senior Honors during their sophomore year and, if admitted, begin the first

semester of their junior year. The Senior Honors curriculum offers students opportunities for independent study in their major, for small seminars on a wide range of topics, for study abroad, and for scholarship assistance.

Senior Honors Curriculum

The Senior Honors curriculum is designed to accomplish two objectives: (1) to continue the process begun through the General Education curriculum of broadening the student’s knowledge and intellectual interests and (2) to give the student the opportunity to develop a greater understanding of the goals and methods of his or her major discipline by completing a Senior Honors project under the direction of a professor in his or her major department. The student in Senior Honors is thus required to enroll in two topical Honors Seminars **outside** the major (HON 403); the University Forum (HON 321, 322); Prospectus Writing (HON 301), in which the student plans the senior project; and in a research course in his or her major for completion of the senior project.

Honors College Senior Honors Requirements

HON 321, 322*.....	0-2
HON 301 (Prospectus Writing).....	1
HON 403 (Honors Seminar, to be taken outside the major).....	3
HON 403 (411, Honors Directed Study or 499, British Studies)**.....	3
Senior Thesis (H492 or other departmental research course in the major)***.....	3
Comprehensive Examination in the Major	

10-12 hrs.

*Students who have completed four (4) hours of HON 321, 322 in General Honors are exempt from this requirement.

**With prior permission of the Dean of the Honors College, students may substitute 411 or 499 for 3 hours of HON 403.

***The senior project must be done in the area of the student’s major unless specific prior approval is given by the Dean of the Honors College for a project in the area of the minor.

Requirements for Graduation with Senior Honors

1. Completion of 12 hours in Senior Honors courses, including senior project
2. Successful completion of comprehensive examination
3. Overall GPA of 3.25 or better at graduation

Typical Schedule for Meeting Senior Honors Requirements

Junior Year	Sem. Hrs.	Senior Year	Sem. Hrs.
HON 321.....	1	HON 322.....	1
HON 301.....	1	Senior Research in Major.....	3
HON 403.....	3		
HON 403 (411 OR 499).....	3		
	8		4

Senior Honors Research

The Senior Honors project involves two phases, the prospectus and the project itself. The prospectus must be presented two semesters prior to graduation; guidelines for the prospectus may be obtained from the Honors College Office. The project should reflect significant individual effort that involves library research, laboratory research, or field research. The project must conform to accepted scholarly procedure within the discipline of the major field. The project may be creative, but a creative project must be executed within the framework of accepted scholarly procedure. That is, a student who produces a creative effort must introduce that effort by adequate discussion of the nature of the creative form involved, including an indication of familiarity with other examples of that form. Any doubts as to the validity of a proposed project should be resolved in discussion



among the project director, the chair of the student's major department, and the Honors Dean. Directions for the format of the senior project may be secured from the Honors College Office or in the *Honors College Handbook*, accessible at www.honors.usm.edu. Graduating students are expected to present their research in a public senior symposium during the semester of graduation.

The comprehensive examination must be taken no later than four weeks before the student is scheduled to graduate. The examination may be either written or oral, at the option of the major department. The exact nature of the examination is a matter for decision by the department involved, but there are general guidelines:

- (1) The examination should be designed so that it can be completed in a maximum of three hours.
- (2) The examination should test the candidate's general knowledge of the field of the major rather than specialized information about some particular aspect of the major.
- (3) The examination should be uniform for all candidates within a particular semester.
- (4) It is the responsibility of the student to contact the department chair and request that the comprehensive examination be designed and administered. These arrangements should be made one semester in advance.
- (5) A student who does not pass the examination upon the first attempt may repeat it once.

Graduation Recognition

A student may graduate with General Honors and/or Senior Honors in the Honors College. Senior Honors will be denoted by the Latin designations, *cum laude* (GPA of 3.25-3.49), *magna cum laude* (GPA of 3.50-3.79), and *summa cum laude* (GPA of 3.80 or higher).

Financial Assistance

Students enrolled in the Honors College may apply for financial aid through the Office of Financial Aid on the same basis as any other student. Scholarships available only to Honors students are listed below.

- (1) **Presidential Scholarships:** Each year, the Honors College will designate a select group of Honors freshmen as Presidential Scholars. Applicants are expected to have high ACT scores, superior grades, and proven leadership ability. The value of this award is equal to tuition, fees, and room and board for a four-year period. (The recipient will receive university-mandated necessary increments each semester.) Presidential Scholars are required to maintain at least a 3.25 GPA. **The Schillig-Baird Scholarships, O. L. and Marie Sims Scholarship, the Pulley-Pulley Gough Scholarship,** and others are awarded from special endowments made available for Presidential Scholarships.
- (2) **George R. Olliphant Scholarships:** Available to a selected number of deserving students enrolled in the Honors College.
- (3) **Honors Scholarships:** Freshmen admitted to the Honors College are designated Honors College Scholars. Awards are based on an excellent record of achievement on the ACT (or SAT) and in high school classes, with attention to Honors, AP, and other rigorous courses successfully completed; high school and community activities; honors and achievements; counselor and teacher recommendations; and an essay. Freshman and sophomore **Honors Scholars** are required to maintain a GPA of at least 3.0. Students admitted to Senior Honors are also eligible for Honors College Scholarships. Juniors and seniors are required to maintain a GPA of at least 3.25. Honors scholarships are in the amount of \$150 per semester for up to \$1,200 for students completing both General and Senior Honors.
- (4) **Travel Awards:** Special travel awards are available for the Study-Abroad Programs sponsored by the University's College of International and Continuing Education. Students should apply to the Dean of the Honors College in late January.

The University Forum

The University Forum is a special series of lectures and programs open to all students, faculty, and townspeople. It is sponsored each fall and spring by the University Honors College and features nationally known speakers in a variety of fields. Students who attend the forum lectures and designated films, concerts, plays, and other activities may receive an hour of credit on a pass/fail basis by enrolling in HON 321 or 322. This course may be repeated by any USM student for up to 8 hours of credit.