

HONORS PROGRAM

The Honors Program is the academic program of distinction at Benedictine College. Each year, the College matriculates up to 24 exceptional students to its Honors Program. These Honors Scholars participate in a challenging curriculum that academically distinguishes them from their peers. The Honors Program draws upon the four pillars of Benedictine College to offer a unique education to exceptionally talented and motivated students. The Honors Program provides an academically enriching experience through intensive seminar classes as part of its core experience. The main outcome its Scholars should expect of the Honors Program is personal development: greater knowledge, a greater love for learning, and a set of skills that will serve them well in graduate school and in further career development. The program aspires to create graduates who will transform the environments in which they find themselves.

Honors Scholars are given specific recognition during the commencement ceremonies. Scholars in good standing with the Program are eligible for a \$2,000 stipend for a project approved by the Honors Committee.

Acceptance into the Program

Typically, prospective students complete an application for admittance to the program during the year prior to their matriculation at the College. To be considered for the Honors Program, students must have a minimum 3.75 high school GPA and at least a 29 ACT (or equivalent). These applications are considered by the Honors Committee, which may decide to admit, waitlist, or deny applicants. In the event that a given cohort falls below 24 students, the Program may fill these openings by considering applications from transfer students or from exceptional students already enrolled in the College.

In order to maintain good standing in the program, students must attend an average of 75% of required Honors events, must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0, and must maintain appropriate conduct. The Program's co-chairs will review each student's performance at the end of each semester. Students who fail to maintain these standards may be placed on probation for a semester if, in the judgment of the Program's co-chairs, their academic performance, attendance record, or conduct warrants. If adequate improvement is not evident after a semester of probation, the student may be expelled from the Program at the discretion of the Honors Committee.

Students may voluntarily withdraw from the Honors Program at any time. However, students who have spent their \$2,000 stipend are required either to complete and present their project to the College, or to work with the entire Honors Committee to arrange repayment of the stipend.

Honors Curriculum

Honors Scholars are educated from a distinct curriculum that builds upon Benedictine College's general education requirements and draws from its liberal arts heritage. The curriculum is divided into an Honors core, additional Honors courses, and an Honors capstone course. The Honors experience culminates in a final project.

The Core Honors Curriculum

Honors Scholars take part in distinctive courses that fulfill specific components of Benedictine College's core requirements.

GNST-1000 BC Experience.

Honors Scholars fulfill the GNST-1000 BC Experience through a week-long academic scholars retreat prior to the beginning of classes their freshman year. They will also receive an introduction to the academic rigor of the program, as well as to the faculty who will teach in it.

ENGL-1030 Honors English Research Seminar.

Honors Scholars are required to complete this course in place of English Composition. This course is an advanced expository writing course with a strong emphasis on research writing.

THEO-2000 Christian Moral Life.

A special section of Christian Moral Life will be taken by Honors Scholars.

PHIL-2310 Philosophy of Nature.

Honors Scholars take this course to fulfill their philosophy core course. Honors students must also complete PHIL-2010 Logic in preparation for Philosophy of Nature, with Logic satisfying one of their two required Philosophical Inquiry foundation courses.

Additional Honors Courses

Honors Scholars will complete at least 12 hours of further coursework. These twelve hours may be completed by any combination of the three following options:

The Great Books Courses. Any course from the Great Books sequence may count towards the completion of this requirement.

Honors-Approved Courses. Each semester, the Honors Program arranges special courses for Honors Scholars. These special courses, capped at 16 students, are taught in a seminar style, are writing intensive, and focus on great works within a given discipline. Typically, they fulfill at least one general education requirement and often fulfill requirements for various majors. Each semester, the Honors scholars will be asked to suggest topics for these courses. Previous Honors-approved courses have included topics as diverse as psychology, the history of science, jazz, and political science.

The Professional Track. Students majoring in professional fields whose requirements to graduate would otherwise prohibit them from completing the Honors Program may contact the program's co-chairs to make arrangements to fulfill the "Additional Honors Courses" requirement through coursework within their major. The co-chairs will meet with the student and the chair of the relevant department to select four courses in which the student will complete additional work. The additional work in these four classes should cohere into a particular competency within the student's chosen field and should mark the student as exceptional in that field.

The Final Project

Honors Scholars complete a year-long project. That project will be graded with either a "no pass," a "pass," or a "pass with distinction." Those who fail to pass the final project will not graduate from the honors program. Typically, planning for this project should begin during a Scholar's sophomore year, and the project should be presented to the College in a Scholar's senior year, at a time and venue selected for this purpose by Honors Committee. Education students are asked to complete their projects prior to student teaching. The purpose of this project is to bring the educational goals of a liberal arts formation beyond the classroom, preparing the students for a future as an active participant in

the life of the mind. The final project should be developed in conjunction with a faculty mentor and it should reflect the highest standards of undergraduate research in a given discipline. At an early stage, the project must be presented to and approved by the Honors Committee. After approval, the Scholar may use the \$2,000 stipend provided by the Program for the project. In approving projects, the Honors Committee will give special consideration as to whether proposals would prepare Scholars for their professional goals following graduation.

Capstone Requirement

HONR-4950 Senior Honors Capstone.

The capstone course is the culmination of the Honors Program. The course will focus on integrating and synthesizing the Honors experiences in which the students have participated through an exploration of works related to a specific topic or theme chosen each year.