University Honors Program Student Handbook

Applying to the Program
Students are invited to apply to the program at the start of their sophomore year. Students receive an invitation via mail and email if their cumulative GPA at the end of their first year was 3.3 or higher.

Three information sessions are held during the first two weeks of the semester. Students are encouraged to attend one of the sessions or contact one of the co-directors for more information if they cannot attend.

Applications can be accessed here and require the following materials:
- Completed online application
- Essay responding to posted prompt
- Unofficial transcript
- 2 completed faculty recommendation forms (one should be from a faculty member in your major or from your college if you are in PCPS or KSOM)

After submitting your application, you will interview with two faculty members from the University Honors Program Council. You must interview with both faculty members to be considered for the program.

Students are notified of admission decisions before sophomore registration for the spring semester.

Program Requirements
Students must complete the following requirements to graduate from the program:
- 3 1-credit Seminars
  - Sophomore Seminar: the last 2 days of Intersession your sophomore year
  - Junior Seminar: spring semester junior year
  - Senior Seminar: fall semester senior year
- 3 3-credit Tutorials
  - Tutorials are one-on-one courses with a fulltime faculty member. The student and faculty member decide on the topic together and create a syllabus for the course. The tutorial cannot duplicate a course that is in the course catalog.
  - Students must complete 1 tutorial in their major, 1 outside of their major, and 1 in any area. Double majors should complete 1 in each major and 1 in any area.
  - Tutorials can fulfill major, minor, and/or concentration requirements. They cannot fulfill GE requirements.
- 1 3-credit Keystone Course
  - This is an interdisciplinary course that is team-taught by two faculty members from different departments.
  - A different course is offered each semester.
  - This course carries a General Education designation. The designation varies each semester as it depends on the course topic.

- o Some courses carry 2 GE designations. However, you may only apply 1 designation to your graduation requirements.
- 6-credit Independent Research Project
  - o You work with a fulltime faculty mentor to develop and carry out an independent research project.
  - o The project spans 2 semesters, typically 3 credits in the fall semester (Honors Project I) and 3 credits in the spring semester (Honors Project II) of your senior year.
  - o Project 1 and 2 can fulfill major, minor, or concentration requirements. They cannot fulfill GE requirements.
  - o Your project culminates in a written thesis that is defended in front of a faculty committee at the end of your spring semester.
  - o You must pass your defense and submit the final version of your thesis to the library for archiving to graduate from the program.
- Graduate with at least a 3.5 cumulative GPA
- You must complete all requirements for the Honors program by the time of your graduation with Latin Honors. In other words, if you are a dual major and you plan on completing your two degrees at different times, all Honors requirements must be done when you graduate with your first degree. For example, if you are a History and Political Science Double Major and you plan to complete your History major at the end of your fourth year and Political Science at the end of a fifth year, you must complete the Honors requirements by the end of the fourth year.

Course Registration
Once admitted to the University Honors Program, you can register for a maximum of 21 credits per semester at no additional cost.

Registration for a Keystone course and the 3 1-credit seminars is done through the online registration system at the time when you register for your other courses. For the Junior and Senior Seminars, no times are listed on the course schedules. Section times will be decided at the start of each semester based on student and faculty course schedules. It does not matter which CRN you select when you register but we ask that you register for the CRN that has the least number of students enrolled.

Registration for Tutorials and Project I and II is done using separate forms that you can get from the co-directors or the program's administrative assistant Melissa Eckenrode. The co-directors will also email the forms to all students at least once a semester.

There is a separate form for Tutorials and for Projects. Both forms require several signatures that must be done in the following order:
- Fulltime faculty member involved in Tutorial or Project
- Department chair of that faculty member's department
- One of the University Honors Program co-directors
- College Dean(s)

It is the student's responsibility to get the first 3 signatures. The co-directors will take care of getting the dean's signature(s) and getting the form to the Registrar's Office.

Defense Format
Students must defend their thesis during the semester they register for Project II. Students should distribute their written thesis to their committee approximately 2 weeks before their scheduled defense.

The format for defenses is a 25-minute presentation by the student followed by a question-and-answer period. Afterward, everyone will leave the room so the committee can have a private discussion. When they are done, they will call the student back in the room with their decision.

Defense Committee
Defense Committees should be composed of the faculty mentor and two other fulltime faculty members. At least one of the faculty members should be in the same discipline or an affiliated discipline as the topic of the project. If the third faculty member comes from an outside discipline, they should have some expertise relevant to the topic.

GPA Policy

Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.3 to apply for Admission into the Honors Program in the fall of their Sophomore Year.

Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.4 going into their senior year in order to remain in the Honors Program.

Students must end the spring semester of senior year with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 to graduate from the program. To that end, we have implemented the following GPA guidelines:
- If cumulative GPA is below 3.4 at the end of sophomore year, students will meet with the co-directors before the start of junior year to discuss the student's plan to improve their GPA. A second meeting will take place before the start of the spring semester to see how the plan is progressing.
- If cumulative GPA is below 3.5 at the end of junior year, students will meet with the co-directors before the start of senior year to discuss the feasibility of continuing in the program. If the student plans to continue, they must develop a plan to improve their GPA to a 3.5 by the end of senior year. The student and co-directors will meet at the end of the fall semester to see if sufficient progress has been made.

FAQ

Admissions/Applications
I missed the application deadline. Can I still apply?

> Unfortunately, no. There is only 1 opportunity to apply to the program. If you miss the deadline, you have missed the opportunity.

I am transferring to the University of Scranton. Can I still apply?

> Transfer students can apply at the beginning of their sophomore year if they enrolled in the University of Scranton during their first year of college or will be starting their sophomore year at the University of Scranton.

Who should complete my recommendation forms for my application?

> We recommend asking professors that have had you in class so they can speak to your academic performance. We also recommend that one of your recommenders be from your major.

What if I didn't have a professor in my major my first year or this semester?

> In this case, we recommend you ask a professor from your college or a class related to your major field of study.

How do I get an unofficial version of my transcript?

> Instructions can be found [here](#).

How do I schedule my 2 interviews?

> You will receive an email informing you which two members of the Honors Council assigned to interview you. Those professors will email you with instructions for signing up for an interview.

I didn't receive an email saying who my interviewers are. What should I do?

> If you don't receive an email by Fall Break telling you who your interviewers are, email the co-directors immediately. There may have been an issue with your application submission.

I received an email saying who my interviewers are but I haven't heard from them. What should I do?

> If you don't hear from your interviewers within a week, please email the co-directors to let them know.

Tutorials

Who can offer a tutorial?

      Tutorials are offered by full-time faculty members. On extremely rare occasions, a part-time faculty member can offer a tutorial; however, this must get separate approval by us and the department chair first.

Can a tutorial count for GE credit?

      No. Tutorials cannot satisfy a GE designation. They can satisfy major, minor, concentration, or free elective requirements.

Who decides whether the tutorial can count for a major, minor, or concentration requirement?

      The department chair or the program director of that major/minor/concentration does. Talk to them when they sign your registration form signed to make sure it counts for what you intended.

If my major is interdisciplinary, what counts for an in-major tutorial or out-of-major tutorial?

      Interdisciplinary majors have more flexibility when it comes to whether a tutorial counts as in-major or our-of-major. We recommend reviewing your tutorial plan with us.

Keystone Course

Can a Keystone course count for more than 1 GE designation?

      No, it can only count for one. If a Keystone course has 2 possible designations, Degree Works will automatically select where it thinks it fits best for you. If you'd prefer it to satisfy a different GE designation, talk to the Registrar's Office to switch it.

Can I take more than one Keystone course?

      Yes.

Projects

Can I do a project outside of my major?

      Yes, but you must get approval from the director of the program. You should email the director and inform them who the faculty mentor will be and what the topic will be.