



The Honors College

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DIRECTOR

The Honors College at Michigan State University serves academically talented, committed students who wish to pursue and achieve academic excellence. The College strives to ensure an enriched academic and social experience for its members and create an environment that fosters active, innovative learning. It emphasizes individualized program planning rather than a tightly prescribed set of courses. Honors College members have the opportunity and are encouraged to design their own individualized programs of study; enroll in dynamic Honors classes, interactive seminars, and graduate courses; participate in faculty-led research projects; and join with other Honors College students who share their curiosity and enthusiasm to enjoy the intimacy of a small college along with the advantages of a major research university.

Organization

Honors course work and academic advising are designed to strengthen individual Honors College members' associations with their respective major departments or schools.

The Director and staff of the Honors College are responsible for fostering the development of appropriate Honors course work, and for coordinating the system of faculty honors advising, throughout the University. They also work directly with Honors College students on many aspects of their individual programs. Staff advisers assist students in discovering special opportunities to enliven and enrich their undergraduate experiences, in exploring different fields of concentration, in pursuing multiple interests, and in making special arrangements and accommodations to help students take fullest advantage of Michigan State University's rich intellectual resources.

Requirements for Membership

Freshmen: The Honors College invites prospective MSU freshmen to be members on the basis of nationally standardized test

scores and outstanding high school achievement. Honors College members are expected to pursue from the outset broader and more rigorous programs of study than other freshmen.

Sophomores: MSU students approaching sophomore standing may be admitted to the Honors College *by application* if they have achieved a distinguished record in the first year of study. The College weighs the level and difficulty of the courses the student has chosen. Normally, a cumulative grade-point average of 3.50 is expected. Applicants are asked to outline their interests and aspirations, to suggest how they might utilize the acceleration and enrichment opportunities provided by membership, and to propose a detailed program of Honors study for the sophomore year.

Transfer Students: Students transferring to Michigan State University from other colleges and universities may apply for membership in the Honors College if their previous records of achievement are comparable to those required of MSU students. Ordinarily, the transfer student's admission to the Honors College must await the successful completion of at least one semester's work in residence. Students transferring two years' work or more are rarely eligible.

Continuing Membership: To remain in good standing, Honors College students must maintain a minimum all-University grade-point average of 3.20, complete for each academic year an Academic Progress Plan, and use the enhanced academic opportunities available.

Basic Features of the Program

In fulfilling the requirement for an enriched program of study, a student may use a combination of the various types of Honors opportunities available. Honors College members are not required to take a specific set of courses, freeing them to select from among the University's vast advanced course offerings. Members may major in any area; Honors experiences are a way to enhance all components of their college educations. Among the

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many resources available to them, Honors College members draw especially from those described below:

Honors Courses and Sections: These classes aim at a more rigorous examination of the subject matter, are limited and selective in enrollment, and provide a stimulating intellectual atmosphere. Honors College students are encouraged to take full advantage of them.

Honors Options: In many courses not offered with Honors sections, students may earn Honors credit by completing Honors-caliber study with special guidance from the instructor.

Honors Research and Independent Study: Honors College members may earn Honors credit for research, thesis, or independent study projects. Departmental Honors College Advisers often help them find faculty specialists willing to guide them in such individual undertakings. Through the Honors College Research Fund small grants are awarded, on a competitive basis, to support faculty-sponsored undergraduate research projects.

Graduate Courses: Honors College students have the opportunity to enroll in graduate courses with the approval of their advisers and of the course instructors. Many do so during the senior year, and some during the junior year or even earlier, often in substitution for advanced undergraduate courses in their fields. Credit earned in graduate courses is applied toward the student's *undergraduate* degree unless he or she obtained prior approval to be *dually enrolled* and was admitted to a graduate program before enrolling in the courses.

Other Membership Benefits

A number of special opportunities are provided to support the attainment of the primary end for which the Honors College was established, namely, the pursuit of academic excellence.

- (a) **Academic Advising:** In addition to Departmental Honors College Advisers, members are served by full-time academic advisers in Eustace-Cole Hall, who are available by appointment to help with program planning. They can be especially helpful to students in exploring possibilities outside their fields of study, and in assisting with choice of major, with major changes, and with additional majors.
- (b) **Enrollment Priority:** In order to implement the academic programs planned by Honors College students and approved by their advisers, the class enrollment system grants Honors College members enrollment priority in Honors and regular courses. Enrollment priority is especially helpful in gaining admission to courses for which demand is heavy or enrollments are restricted.
- (c) **The Honors College Bulletin of Course Descriptions.** Each year members receive a *Bulletin* containing detailed descriptions of current courses of special interest, to assist them in making well-informed choices in planning the following year's enrollments.
- (d) **Priority Admission to Limited Enrollment Programs:** A student who enters the Honors College with a major prefer-

ence in a limited-enrollment program is guaranteed priority admission to the chosen major, provided that the student, upon reaching junior standing, is an Honors College member in good standing and meets the standard admission requirements of the degree-granting college and the department or school of the major. If these criteria are met, admission to the major is automatic; i.e., the student is not subject to the additional review or screening applied to non-Honors College students.

- (e) **Graduation Recognition:** Graduating members of the Honors College are given special recognition in the Commencement program. In addition, an Honors College designation is recorded in their academic records, and their diplomas are embossed accordingly.
- (f) **Graduate/Professional School Planning:** The Honors College actively assists its members in applying for graduate school admission and fellowship support. The Honors College also serves as the campus liaison office for many major national and international fellowship competitions (e.g., Rhodes, Marshall, Churchill, Mellon, Javits, and Truman). On request, the Director of the Honors College will provide members with letters of recommendation to graduate and professional schools or to prospective employers.
- (g) **Honors College:** The Honors College is housed in Eustace-Cole Hall, a historic building conveniently located at the confluence of East and West Circle Drives. In addition to staff offices, this facility provides lounge and study space for members, rooms for Honors seminars, and a student technology laboratory.
- (h) **Honors Housing:** Designated space is available on special *Honors floors* within the campus residence hall system. Honors housing provides a study-oriented living situation conducive to lively social and intellectual exchange.

The Academic Scholars Program

MSU offers the Academic Scholars Program each year to students who are not initially invited to join Honors College but may be interested in doing so during their first year. Participants in this program are provided some options to the standard Integrative Studies courses and have automatic access to a wide range of Honors courses and sections. The program includes a residential option similar to that offered to Honors College members.

Questions regarding the Honors College may be addressed to:

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