



The Honors College

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DEAN

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 Dean 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 advisors 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 Michigan State University freshmen to be members on the basis of nationally standardized test scores and outstanding high school achievement. Honors College members are expected from the outset to pursue broader and more rigorous programs of study than other freshmen.

Sophomores: Michigan State University students approaching sophomore standing may be admitted to the Honors College by invitation only. Students are invited to be members at the end of the first semester of their freshman year on the basis of their class rank and coursework.

Transfer Students: Admittance to the Honors College is by *invitation only*. All transfer students who have been at MSU for one calendar year or less are automatically included in the annual review process each spring semester, which targets the top 10% of first year students in each college (based on cumulative GPA at the end of the fall semester) and examines each student's record for evidence of academic excellence. The MSU Honors College is designed as a four-year experience, and membership is not available to students who will reach junior standing (56 credits) by the end of the spring semester in which their record is reviewed.

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

Basic Features of the Program

In fulfilling the expectation 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 to satisfy the university's general education requirements, freeing them to select from among the university's vast advanced course offerings. Members may major in any area and participate in Honors experiences as a way to enhance all components of their college education. Among the many resources available to Honors College members are 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, students may earn Honors credit by completing Honors-caliber study and/or academic service learning experiences 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. Students engage in research through the Professorial Assistant Program, Honors Research Seminars, independent study, or research appointments with faculty. The Honors College Research Fund provides small grants 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 advisors and their 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 mission of the Honors College, namely, the pursuit of academic excellence.

- (a) **Academic Advising:** In addition to departmental Honors College advisors, members are served by full-time academic advisors 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, major changes, and additional majors.
- (b) **Enrollment Priority:** In order to implement the academic programs planned by Honors College students and approved by their advisors, the class enrollment system grants Honors College members enrollment priority in Honors and regular courses. Enrollment priority is especially helpful in gaining admission to upper-level courses and scheduling when only single sections are offered.
- (c) **The Honors College Bulletin of Course Descriptions.** Each year Honors College prepares a list and

description of Honors courses and others of special interest, which is available on the Honors College Web site.

- (d) **Scholarships:** In addition to scholarships awarded by the university to incoming students, Honors College members are eligible to apply for a variety of scholarships administered by the college for continuing students.
- (e) **Priority Admission to Limited Enrollment Programs:** A student who enters the Honors College with a major preference in a limited enrollment program is granted 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.
- (f) **Graduation Recognition:** Graduating members of the Honors College are given special recognition in the commencement program. In addition, an Honors College designation is recorded on their transcript and diploma.
- (g) **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, Mitchell, Churchill, Javits, Goldwater, Hollings, Truman, and Udall). On request, the Dean of the Honors College will provide members with letters of recommendation to graduate and professional schools or to prospective employers.
- (h) **Eustace-Cole Hall:** The Honors College is housed in 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.
- (i) **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

Michigan State University offers the Academic Scholars Program to students who are not initially invited to join the Honors College. Such students may be interested in pursuing a two-year enrichment program or joining the Honors College during their first year. Participants in this program are provided Honors sections of 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 Honors College members.

Questions regarding the Honors College may be addressed to:
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