

THE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

The University Honors Program at Georgian Court is dedicated to offering outstanding students the opportunity to engage in academic experiences, inside and outside the classroom, that are challenging and distinctive. The program is grounded in course offerings that help students to engage material in more depth than they might otherwise. Class sizes are kept small, and material is chosen to engage honors students broadly and deeply and encourage them to ask questions, make connections, and entertain new perspectives, all while being challenged intellectually. Students are able to work closely with their professors, and to become part of a community of honors students who challenge and support one another academically and foster one another's intellectual growth. This sense of community is enhanced not only in the classroom, but through extracurricular activities and the option for students to live in special honors housing.

Most courses in the University Honors Program fulfill general education requirements, so University Honors students do not have to take additional required courses to complete the program. Students also have the option of completing Honors by Contract, independent research projects in an area of interest for the student completed with a faculty mentor, to fulfill honors requirements. Honors by Contract projects may take many forms, though they must conform to the requirements as noted on the contracts.

Note: Information in this section refers to the University Honors Program. Students interested in the Psychology Scholars Program should review information about that program in this catalog. Students are welcome to join both the University Honors Program and Psychology Scholars Program. Qualified students interested in departmental honors should seek advice from their department chairperson. Departmental honors may not be available in all departments and is not associated with the University Honors Program.

Goals and Objectives of the Program

The goals and objectives of individual honors courses align with those of the General Education Bridge Program as required, and Honors by Contract projects should deepen the student's engagement with the goals of the program and course in which they are completed. The University Honors Program also has three additional goals: to create a community of learners who challenge and support one another academically and intellectually; to give all students an opportunity to engage in rigorous learning opportunities grounded in academic and/or field research that are self-directed, but with guidance from faculty mentors; and to provide students with excellent honors-related advising so they remain on track to complete all academic and curricular program requirements.

As members of the University Honors Program, students receive an enriched academic curriculum featuring:

- faculty members chosen for their excellence as teaching-scholars;
- dedicated honors classes focused on in-depth learning and intellectual challenge;
- a student community made up of committed high achievers;
- opportunities to pursue rigorous scholarly assignments and independent research;
- close faculty mentoring;

- priority registration and academic advisement;
- assistance with funding to present at regional and national conferences; and
- special recognition at Commencement ceremonies.

In addition to the enhanced academic opportunities listed above, University Honors Program students may also:

- develop and take part in special cocurricular and cultural activities that invigorate the social, aesthetic, and spiritual dimensions of their university experience;
- live in honors housing (as available); and
- take advantage of opportunities for service trips, both domestic and international.

What is Required to Graduate with University Honors?

Academic Requirements

To continue in the University Honors Program, students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative overall GPA of 3.3. Students are also required to make consistent progress toward fulfilling the requirements of the program. Failure to meet these requirements may result in students being placed on Honors Program Probation or being dismissed from the program. See Honors Program Probation/Dismissal from Program below.

Curricular Requirements

In addition to maintaining the academic requirements listed above, students must also complete the required curriculum/course requirements in order to graduate with honors. These curricular requirements vary according to when the student entered the program.

Transfer students who have participated in an honors program at their previous institution **may** qualify for some honors course credits at GCU. Contact the director of the University Honors Program for information.

Students entering the program the first semester of their freshman year must complete the following honors courses (total of eight honors courses):

- EN221 Honors Argument: Rhetoric & Research (must earn a grade of C or better)
- GEN199 WI: Discovering Self in the Universe
- GEN400 WI: Visioning a Future
- One Honors by Contract experience, with the exception of students who are also Psychology Scholars, for whom completion of honors PS431 (Experimental Psychology) will satisfy the Honors by Contract requirement
- Any **four** additional honors courses, which may be a combination of designated honors classes and Honors by Contract

Students entering the program after the completion of the first semester of their freshman year, including transfer students with fewer than 30 credits, must complete the following honors courses (total of seven honors courses):

- EN221 Honors Argument: Rhetoric & Research
- GEN199 WI: Discovering Self in the Universe
- GEN400 WI: Visioning a Future
- One Honors by Contract experience, with the exception of students who are also Psychology Scholars, for whom completion of honors

PS431 (Experimental Psychology) will satisfy the Honors by Contract requirement

- Any **three** additional honors courses, which may be a combination of designated honors classes and Honors by Contract

Students entering the program after the completion of their freshman year, including transfer students with 30 or more credits, must complete the following honors courses (total of six honors courses):

- EN221 Honors Argument: Rhetoric & Research*
 - *For students, including transfers, who enter the program after completing at least 60 credits, the requirement that EN221 be one of the student's six honors courses can be waived if: (1) the student takes a WI-designated honors course at GCU other than GEN199 or GEN400; or (2) the student completed an honors Composition/Writing course with a grade of "B" or higher as part of another college or university's honors program.
- GEN400 WI: Visioning a Future
- If the student has **not taken GEN199 WI: Discovering Self in the Universe** at the time the student enters the program, the student is **required to take an honors** version of the class. If the student has taken a non-honors version of the class before entering the University Honors Program, or if the student is not required to take GEN199 WI: Discovering Self in the Universe, then this requirement is waived.
- One Honors by Contract experience, with the exception of students who are also Psychology Scholars, for whom completion of honors PS431 (Experimental Psychology) will satisfy the Honors by Contract requirement
- Any **two to four** additional honors courses (depending on whether EN221 and/or honors GEN199 has been waived), which may be a combination of designated honors classes and Honors by Contract

Cocurricular Requirements

As active members of the Honors Program, students are required to attend program meetings and to participate in university-sponsored cocurricular activities and events designated by the director of the University Honors Program.

What is Required for Admission to the Honors Program?

Students Entering the Program as First-Time College Students (based on high school performance)

Potential University Honors Program students will be identified and recruited by admissions counselors on the basis of their academic excellence in high school college preparatory courses. Consideration will also be given to students' course selection with preference for students who take honors and advanced placement classes. Admission to the University Honors Program will be by invitation of the director upon review of candidates' records. See above requirements for details about what is required to graduate with honors after being admitted to the program.

Current GCU Students (Non-Transfer) Entering the Program

Current GCU students who have a GPA of at least 3.7 at GCU may apply for admission to the University Honors Program by submitting an application to the director of the University Honors Program. Meeting the GPA requirement does not guarantee admission to the program. Contact the director for information about how to apply. Please note: Students will not be admitted to the program in the middle of a semester

and instead will be directed to apply after their grades are reported for the current semester. However, students should contact the director for information as soon as they know they are interested in applying. See above requirements for details about what is required to graduate with honors after being admitted to the program.

Transfer Students

Transfer students who have a GPA of at least 3.7 from their previous institution may apply for admission to the University Honors Program by submitting an application to the director of the University Honors Program. Meeting the GPA requirement does not guarantee admission to the program. Contact the director for information about how to apply. Preference will be given to students who were honors students at their previous institution. See above requirements for details about what is required to graduate with honors after being admitted to the program.

Honors Program Probation/Dismissal from Program

Students who do not maintain the required GPA may continue in the University Honors Program on Honors Program Probation for at least one semester. Failure to meet the GPA standards may result in dismissal from the program after this probationary semester. If after one semester on probation the student has improved but has not met the GPA requirements, the student may petition the director of the University Honors Program for an additional semester on probation. This additional semester will be granted at the director's discretion. Consideration will be given to how close the student is to the required GPA, how much the student's GPA has improved, and if the student has a sound plan for continued improvement.

Students are also required to make consistent progress toward fulfilling the requirements of the program. The program is designed to be completed if students take one honors course per semester. Students are not required to follow this pattern. However, if students fall behind this pacing, they may be asked to submit a plan explaining how they plan to complete the program on time. If a student falls two or more semesters behind (for example, if a student has taken only two honors courses after four semesters at GCU), that student may be placed on probation and may be removed from the program if significant progress has not been made to get back on track after one semester on probation. Honors probation does not affect the student's standing in the university.

Students may also be dismissed from the program if they take one of the courses they are required to take as honors students, such as GEN400, as a non-honors class. Students who have difficulty scheduling required classes as honors should contact the director.

Students who are dismissed from the program will lose all privileges associated with the University Honors Program, including scholarships, access to honors housing, and priority registration.

No student will graduate with honors who has not completed the required number of honors courses and who does not meet the GPA requirements at the time of graduation, even if the student has never been on probation and has not previously been dismissed from the program.

Cocurricular & Extracurricular Programs

The University Honors Program sponsors a variety of academic and cultural events for the enrichment of the intellectual, social, and spiritual life of the university.