

W.O.U. Honors Program Overview

In existence since 1984, the W.O.U. Honors Program strives to help you achieve your college goals and provide you with lasting membership in a community of friends and scholars.

INTRODUCTION

For students interested in nearly any area of study, the Honors Program offers a cohesive, challenging alternative to W.O.U.'s Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LACC). The Honors Program emphasizes sustained contact between professors and students as a basis for intellectual exchange in an atmosphere of mutual respect and interest. Best of all, it costs nothing to participate in Honors, and every course is designed in a seminar format so that students are encouraged to participate.

FIRST YEAR IN HONORS

Understandably, the highlight for most first year students is the class-related field trips. Students attend a concert or musical performance during their fall music class and visit the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland for their spring theatre class. In addition to their creative arts courses in music, art, and theatre, students study classical world literature and philosophy in a two-term interdisciplinary sequence. Classes are capped at 25 -- a welcome contrast to much larger non-Honors first-year courses.



SECOND YEAR IN HONORS

Sophomore year is designed to familiarize students with strategies of inquiry and knowledge in the natural and social sciences. The social science sequence features both physical and economic geography. A social science elective also allows students to choose a class from the diverse non-Honors offerings in such fields as political science, history, sociology, criminal justice, psychology and anthropology. The Honors natural science sequence includes laboratory and classroom study unified by the theme "The Search for Order." These general science courses cover biology as well as earth sciences.

Starting sophomore year, students also become eligible for Honors scholarship money, which continues throughout their junior and senior years.

THIRD YEAR IN HONORS

During junior year Honors students complete their Honors seminar and Honors electives requirements. These classes vary in topic but all derive from faculty who express interest in teaching a “dream” course in their area of expertise. Past topics include Genre Analysis, Experiential Education, Neurocognition, and Environmental Writing, to name a few.

Junior year also presents students with the opportunity to begin working on their thesis--a culminating work on a subject of their choosing. Although much of the thesis is independent study, students work with faculty advisors who can provide valuable feedback--and serve as a resources for career advice and recommendations.

FOURTH YEAR IN HONORS

Seniors typically concentrate on completing the graduation requirements in their major and minor. Consequently, Honors requirements are minimal during senior year but are often highlighted by the completion of the thesis. When finished, Honors students present their theses at a public university reception, and their projects are cataloged and housed at W.O.U.'s Hamersly Library.

Students who complete the program's requirements will also have the title of their thesis printed in the graduation program and be asked to stand for applause during the graduation ceremony. Additionally, the words “*In cursu honorum*, Honors Program” will appear on their W.O.U. diplomas.

Curriculum Summary

The table below summarizes the credit hour requirements for completing the W.O.U. Honors Program. A full listing of all Honors courses, including all of the yearly seminars and electives, can be found on the Honors website at: www.wou.edu/honors

| Program Year | Academic Field | Academic Subject | Number of classes | Credits |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------|
| 1st Year | Creative Arts | Music, Art, Theatre | 3 | 9 |
| | English | Classical World Literature I & II | 2 | 8 |
| | Philosophy | Ancient to Modern Philosophy | 2 | 6 |
| 2nd Year | General Science | Biology & Earth Sciences | 3 | 12 |
| | Social Science | Physical & Economic Geography | 2 | 8 |
| | Social Science Elective | Chosen from non-Honors curriculum | 1 | 3-4 |
| 3rd Year | Honors Seminar | Topics Vary | 1 | 3-4 |
| | Honors Electives | Topics Vary | 2 | 6 |
| | Honors Thesis | Thesis Orientation | 1 | 4 |
| 4th Year | Honors Thesis | Independent Study | 1 | 3 |
| Total Honors Curriculum Credits | | | 18 | 59-61 |

