

Honors Program

at western oregon university



wou.edu/honors

Western Oregon University's Honors Program is designed to challenge and enrich the intellectual lives of students of outstanding ability and high academic achievement. The program offers a distinctive interdisciplinary curriculum in a learning community of students and faculty. Best of all, it costs nothing to participate in Honors. The program requires only an intellectual curiosity and a willingness to challenge oneself.

mission

The Honors Program at Western Oregon University is designed to nourish intellectual abilities and cultivate interest in new subjects and activities. The program is comprised of dedicated, friendly, and highly motivated students who pursue a variety of majors, minors, and extracurricular activities, ranging from creative arts to community service and study abroad.

It is the goal of the Honors Program to help its students achieve their highest aspirations. Toward this end, we seek to foster a way of life in which faculty and students understand that inquiry and learning happen everyday, and in a shared and continuous mode. The Honors Program's mission is therefore to:

- Develop a learning community committed to scholarly inquiry
- Offer a rigorous disciplinary environment to prepare students for excellence inside and outside of the classroom
- Create and sustain an interdisciplinary curriculum that will encourage faculty and students in their intellectual pursuits

honors curriculum

Students admitted to honors as freshmen enter a program that fulfills WOU's Liberal Arts Core Curriculum requirements. Honors classes are small so that speaking, writing and thinking skills can be fully developed. The Honors Program is compatible with, and a powerful complement to, nearly any academic major.

First and second years

Honors Creative Arts
Honors Literature sequence
Honors Philosophy sequence
Honors General Science (with labs)
Honors Social Science sequence
Honors Elective

Third and fourth years

Honors Elective
Honors Seminar
Thesis Orientation Seminar
Thesis Development Seminar



Most Honors students follow this program, but classes may be adjusted to avoid scheduling conflicts with an individual student's major, minor, or team-sport activities.



"The Honors Program features far more than classes. It's the best way to combine friendship and shared learning experiences -- and make a great college even better."

Dr. Gavin Keulks, Honors Director



Find out more about the
Honors Program at
Western Oregon University

503-838-8519
honors@wou.edu

See the current catalog for a
complete list of classes and course
descriptions, available online at
wou.edu/catalog.

Admissions Office:
503-838-8211 (V/TTY)
1-877-877-1593
wolfgram@wou.edu

graduation and awards

At graduation, each honors student receives a B.A. or B.S. degree in their major, wears white honors cords, and stands to be recognized as an Honors Program student. The title of each honors graduate's thesis is listed in the commencement program. Honors students' official transcripts make it clear that they are Honors Program graduates. Starting in sophomore year, students in Honors also qualify for select Honors scholarships.

honors seminars and electives

Upper-division Honors seminars allow students to work closely with professors teaching once-in-a-lifetime dream courses. For both seminars and lower-division electives, faculty members submit proposals to the Honors Committee to teach cross-disciplinary courses. Four students serve on the Honors Committee. These courses evolve from the intellectual passions of W.O.U.'s professors and are an extraordinarily rewarding experience for both faculty and Honors students. Past subjects have ranged across such diverse topics as Prison Writing, Exploring Literacy, Causes of Peace, Oregon Women Suffrage History, and Why do we Move: A Cross-Disciplinary Approach.



“The Writing Literacy seminar I took was one of the most fun, interesting, and beneficial classes I’ve taken at W.O.U. What’s more was that it was taught by a professor who was truly passionate about the subject.”

Senior honors student

honors thesis or senior project

In the thesis orientation and development seminars, during their junior year, students formalize a topic of their choosing into a thesis/project proposal. They then work with a W.O.U. faculty advisor to complete their work by the end of their senior year. Student projects can be creative, scholarly, pedagogical, or scientific in nature.

The thesis is the culmination of each student's undergraduate career and is publicly presented to the college community at the annual Thesis Presentation Events. Whether applying to graduate schools or employers, Honors students discover that their senior project is a distinctive addition to their professional portfolios.

additional benefits

Some of the greatest benefits of participating in the Honors Program are the close friendships and class-related field trips. Every class in Honors is designed in seminar format and capped at 25 students — a welcome contrast to the much larger courses that non-Honors students usually take. Registration is also stress-free: Honors students are guaranteed a place in any Honors course.

All Honors students typically enroll in common courses during their freshmen and sophomore years, making it convenient to get to know their classmates. Because Honors students must also take classes outside of the Honors Program in every term, they are never isolated from the WOU community.

application and admission

Entering freshmen with a grade-point average of 3.5 or better, or SAT scores over 1150 (combined critical reading and math), or ACT scores of 27 or higher are encouraged to apply. Applications are accepted from any student who has an inquiring mind, thrives on intellectual stimulation, and wants to join a dedicated learning community.

Applications are accepted January 1 through July 30. Applications can be downloaded online at www.wou.edu/honors. The same application provides the option of requesting to room in A.S.H. (Associated Students in Honors) Hall, the all-Honors wing of Ackerman Hall, W.O.U.'s LEED-platinum residence hall.

Application for admission to W.O.U. must be made separately from application for admission to the Honors Program.

financial aid

Students applying to the Honors Program are encouraged to apply for scholarships and other financial aid from W.O.U. Students must file an early application, since scholarship applications and federal forms must be filed by the end of January.

For information about financial aid, write or call:

Financial Aid Office
Western Oregon University
Monmouth, OR 97361

503-838-8475