

Honors College

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The Honors College provides a special opportunity for exceptional students seeking a community of diverse individuals for whom the quest for knowledge is its own reward.

Honors College classes are listed under HONR. In addition, honors versions of departmental courses are designated with an "H" in each semester's course list, e.g., BIOL 100H or ENGL 206H.

The Honors College at UMBC

The Honors College is for students who seek exceptional intellectual stimulation and challenge. Students are offered a rich liberal arts experience through honors classes,

interactions with visiting scholars, internships, study abroad and study-travel programs, and other extracurricular opportunities. One of the hallmarks of the program is specialized attention. Each semester, students receive individual formal advising from Honors College staff who are also available for consultation throughout the year. Membership in the Honors College is intentionally kept small. Limited to an enrollment of 500, the college seeks to have 125 first-year students matriculate each fall.

Students admitted to the Honors College undertake general honors study in honors versions of regular classes and specially commissioned honors seminars. Honors seminars,

the subjects of which vary from semester to semester, cover a wide variety of interdisciplinary topics. These courses are specially designed with regard to Honors College values to supplement the UMBC curriculum. Honors courses have limited enrollment and afford participants the opportunity for close interaction with distinguished members of the UMBC faculty.

The Honors College encourages the development of advanced-level honors curricula and assists honors students in developing their programs, applying to graduate or professional schools, and gaining financial support for research and graduate study. Recent Honors College graduates have been accepted into programs at Princeton, Yale, Stanford, University of Pennsylvania, Oxford, Cambridge, Duke, Harvard, NYU and Georgetown, among others. Students who complete the Honors College curriculum graduate with a Certificate of General Honors, which is noted on their transcript.

Honors Orientation

Incoming Honors College freshmen attend a special honors orientation along with students in the specialty Scholars Programs. The program provides students with the opportunity to meet other new students, as well as faculty, staff and current students. They learn about university requirements and, with the help of faculty and peer advisors, begin to plan their academic careers. They participate in an introductory seminar that acquaints them with the collaborative approach to learning that is characteristic of most courses in the Honors College. A parent orientation also is scheduled.

Advisement

The faculty and staff of the Honors College are available to honors students for advising concerning academic programs, course selection, study abroad, special graduate scholarships, independent study and research options,

and graduate or professional school admissions. All Honors College students are encouraged to visit the Honors College on a regular basis for informal conversation with the staff and other students. Honors students must schedule an advising appointment in the Honors College each semester prior to advanced registration.

Peer Advisors and Peer Counselors

The Honors College peer advisors and peer counselors are upper-division students who have been trained to mentor new students and to assist new students in the transition from high school to college and in the development of their academic plans. The peer advisors supplement advisement by the Honors College faculty and staff and work in close conjunction with the professional advisors.

Honors Courses

Many honors courses involve more in-depth treatment of topics covered in the regular class sections, while others resemble graduate seminars in their small size, depth, intensity of scholarship, and in the special character of the relationship engendered by working closely with faculty members and other students. Honors classes are generally limited to no more than 25 students. Each semester the Honors College offers 40 to 50 courses in the Honors Forum, honors sections of regular classes, regularly scheduled honors courses and specially commissioned honors courses.

The Honors Forum

In their first year at UMBC, entering Honors College members enroll in Honors 100, which meets weekly in the fall semester. The Honors Forum introduces students to the academic method and to the pursuit of excellence through honors education. Students interact with campus researchers and creative artists, participate in service learning and leadership devel-

opment, gain research and study skills applicable to all their future academic endeavors, and reflect upon what it means to be a full member of an academic community.

Honors Sections of Regular Classes

These are often introductory level courses, such as Ideas and Images in American Culture (AMST 100H), Concepts of Biology (BIOL 100H), and Introduction to World Literature and History (ENGL 206H), but there are also some 300- and 400-level Honors sections for advanced undergrads in the Honors College. The honors section explores a topic at greater depth, introduces material not covered in the regular course, requires an added amount of writing, and features considerable dialogue among students and faculty.

Regularly Scheduled Honors Courses

Some honors courses, such as HONR 390: Reflections on Community Service, HONR 410: Honors Internship and HONR 490: Senior Honors Project are scheduled regularly. Courses of particular interest to students at a research university are HONR 210 and 211, The Great Books Seminars, and HONR 220: The Honors Leadership Seminar.

Specially Commissioned Honors Seminars

These seminars are focused on a particular theme, such as Art and the Cultures of Childhood; Science, Mathematics and Technology in the Ancient World; Death and Dying; and Literature of the Holocaust. These seminars are interdisciplinary, and sometimes they are team-taught by faculty members from different departments.

Honors in the Major

Many UMBC major programs have developed honors tracks for graduating with departmental honors. All members of the Honors College are encouraged to pursue their majors with honors where the opportunity exists. Departmental honors courses count toward Honors College requirements as well.

Special Opportunities

Living/Learning Community

The Honors College Living/Learning Community offers the opportunity for members of the Honors College to continue their collaborative learning experiences in a relaxed residential setting. Students are able to pursue a range of academic and social activities with like-minded colleagues. At the same time, they will develop strong friendships through common goals, classes, conversation and fun.

Study Abroad

The Honors College encourages its students to take part in study abroad programs. Generally, students who wish to complete international studies during the academic year should be juniors. In past years, Honors College students have studied in China, Spain, Italy, Guatemala, England, Australia and New Zealand, among other places.

Study-Travel Programs

The Honors College maintains an active study-travel program as a way to expose its members to the diversity of human culture and cultural artifacts from other times and places. Recent programs conducted by the college have included trips to France, Italy, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Central Europe.

Grants and Scholarships

The Honors College offers grants and scholarships that are awarded to current students for research, coursework and independent study during winter and summer sessions. In addition, the Jay Freyman

Scholarships offer financial assistance to Honors College students pursuing an international educational experience.

Special Scholarship Programs

In collaboration with the Office of the Provost, the Honors College seeks out potential applicants for a variety of grants and fellowships for undergraduate, graduate and international studies, including the most prestigious, such as the Rhodes, Marshall, Goldwater, Fullbright and Truman scholarships.

Application to the Honors College

Admission to the Honors College is highly selective; the college seeks to enroll a maximum of 125 new students each fall semester. For consideration, the applicant must complete the university's application, as well as submit the following to the Honors College:

1. The Honors College application
2. An essay
3. Answers to a series of questions about interests and experiences
4. A letter of recommendation from a teacher specifically addressing the candidate's suitability for honors study.

In reviewing applications, the Honors College places special emphasis on the written material submitted. The strength of the high school curriculum, GPA and standardized test scores are also very important. Applicants should have a minimum GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale in a strong college preparatory curriculum that includes honors, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate coursework and an exceptional SAT score.

Transfer students, as well as students currently enrolled at UMBC, may apply for admission to the Honors College by submitting the materials outlined above. The student should have a minimum cumulative college GPA of 3.25.

Scholarships

Honors College applicants may be considered for the following Honors College scholarships:

The Honors College Fellows

Awarded to Honors College applicants who demonstrate the highest degree of achievement and academic curiosity. Fellows receive a fixed-dollar, four-year award covering incoming tuition, mandatory fees, room and board.

The Honors College Scholars

Awarded to outstanding freshman students and transfers, these scholarships provide \$1,000 per year.

Academic Requirements

Honors College students must earn a 3.25 GPA each semester and complete one honors course per semester. In addition to HONR 100 and a college-level writing course, a minimum of six honors courses with grades of "B" or better are required for the completion of the Honors Certificate. Honors courses must be taken across the undergraduate disciplines. All students who successfully complete the Honors College academic requirements and graduate with a cumulative 3.25 GPA or higher are granted a Certificate of General Honors. The Certificate is awarded at an Honors College Medallion Ceremony at the time of graduation and is recorded on the student's academic transcript.