



**WVU Honors College  
Honors Foundation  
Program Student  
Handbook 2024-2026**

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## **Honors College Mission**

The Honors College enhances the undergraduate experience for students at West Virginia University by building a community of scholars who enrich their education in the classroom and beyond.

## **Honors College Values**

### **We lead.**

The Honors College teaches students to be leaders in their classrooms and in their communities, pursuing a spirit of innovative thinking, responsible and accountable conduct, and extraordinary achievement. We model that leadership by fostering innovative learning environments that are “test-beds” for excellent teaching across the curriculum, and by epitomizing the integrity that we expect in our students.

### **We explore.**

The Honors College helps students cultivate a curiosity about the world around them; develop persistence and resilience in solving the academic and social problems they encounter and research; and pursue an adventurous spirit that embraces intellectual risks for the sake of personal, academic, and community growth.

### **We build.**

The Honors College builds an environment that empowers its students to construct their own solutions to individual and collective problems; to work harder and more deeply in the scholarly, research, and experiential activities they undertake; and to forge connections with peers, mentors, and community partners to better share our knowledge.

### **We work together.**

The Honors College hosts an inclusive community of scholars by collaborating with faculty and staff across the entire campus; by facilitating connections among students through social and academic activities in both their living and learning environments; and by encouraging them to expand the scope of their work to include local, regional, and global contexts.

### **We are Mountaineers.**

As a prominent component of West Virginia’s flagship institution, the Honors College cultivates an attitude of service to the Mountain State, our broader region, and the world. By combining a service mindset with the leader’s stance, the explorer’s vision, the builder’s work ethic, and the community’s collaboration, we embody and model the Mountaineer spirit.

## Academics

We want you to take intellectual risks, make discoveries, explore the world around you, participate in exciting cutting-edge research projects and find your passion!

### Honors Foundations Program

The Honors Foundations Program is a two-year Honors program designed to enrich students' first years on campus.

This program is designed for first-time freshmen, and will complement their academic programs in their majors, while fostering community and service in Honors, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia and the world.

### Program Requirements

To complete the program, students must:

- Complete a minimum of five Honors courses, and 13 Honors credits
  - Students must complete both benchmarks
  - 1 course/credit must be HONR 102: Introduction to Honors
    - Ideally completed within four semesters, i.e., students should aim to complete one Honors course per semester. In the first semester students may have two Honors courses due to HONR 102
- Meet ongoing requirements for good standing
  - After year one:
    - Complete at least two Honors courses/ four Honors credits (including HONR 102)
    - Maintain 3.0 Honors and cumulative GPA
    - Students who do not meet this requirement will be removed from the Honors Foundations Program
  - To extend after year two:
    - Complete four Honors courses/ ten Honors credits (including HONR 102)
    - Maintain 3.5 Honors and 3.0 cumulative GPA
- Final requirements
  - 3.5 GPA in Honors credits
    - Final Honors GPA will be calculated using the 5 Honors courses/ 13 Honors credits which will provide the highest Honors GPA
  - 3.0+ cumulative GPA at the time of program completion

- Complete the Honors Foundations Program Exit Survey
- Apply to complete the Honors Foundations Program (link provided in Exit Survey)

*Please note that students who have completed 4 semesters in the Honors Foundations program but have not met the courses, credits and GPA requirements will be removed from the program.*

## Program Benefits

- Smaller sections of General Education Foundation (GEF) and introductory major courses
- Access to innovative Honors courses that focus on enrichment instead of acceleration
- Inclusion in an Honors community — including Honors housing, peer leadership opportunities and co-curricular programming—designed to make the large campus smaller
- Organizations where you can connect with your fellow Honors students, such as the Honors Student Association, the Honors LGBTQ+ & Allies Affinity Group, and the First Gen Affinity Group.
- Priority registration for classes before non-Honors students (in your cohort) while actively enrolled in the Honors Foundations program
- Honors advising in your major
- Access to peer tutoring and mentoring
- Recognition at graduation and on your transcript
- Opportunities to forge connections with other Honors students, advisors, faculty and staff members.

## Honors College Policies & Requirements

### Good Standing Requirements

There are several procedures in place to ensure that students maintain the academic rigor and integrity integral to the Honors College. Among these are the regulations surrounding GPAs and Honors course completion.

- After year one, students must maintain a 3.0 Honors and cumulative GPA
- Complete at least two Honors courses/ four Honors credits (including HONR 102)
  - Students who do not meet this requirement will be removed from the Honors Foundations Program.
  - Since the Honors Foundations Program is a two year program, once removed you are not allowed to re-apply for re-entry.
- To extend after year two, students must have maintained a 3.5 Honors and 3.0 cumulative GPA and have completed four Honors courses/ ten Honors credits (including HONR 102)

Removal from the Honors Foundations Program includes the loss of all privileges associated with being an Honors student. Note that removal from the Honors College is not recorded on university transcripts.

### Honors Student Code of Conduct

As an Honors student, you will be held to a high-level level of academic integrity and your academic performance is subject to the following academic integrity requirements set forth in the [University Catalog](#).

Failure to adhere to these principles may lead to action at the discretion of the Dean of the Honors College and subject to the [West Virginia University Student Code of Conduct](#).

### Causes for Dismissal

Causes for dismissal from the Honors College include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Academic dishonesty
- Theft and/or destruction of University and/or Honors College Property
- Criminal offense
- Violation of the Honors Student Code of Conduct

All dismissal matters are at the discretion of the Dean of the Honors College. For an explanation of the appeals process, please see the [Student Code of Conduct at Student Life](#).

## Leaving the Honors College

Students wishing to leave the Honors College for any reason are asked to alert the Honors College office. You must send an email to [honors@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:honors@mail.wvu.edu) from your University MIX account stating that you wish to withdraw your membership from the Honors College effective immediately and include your full name. **We WILL NOT accept an email from any other account.** If you cannot access your MIX account, you will need to come into the office and provide us with a written notice.



## Earning Honors Foundations Credit

Students can earn Honors Foundations credit in a variety of ways.

### Honors Sections of Traditional Courses

Most Honors courses are special sections of standard classes with a reduced class size. These classes are typically more focused on open discussion and interaction.

- For e.g., MUSC 111 - (H01) – Introduction to Music

### Innovative Honors Foundations Courses taught by Honors Faculty Fellows

Honors Foundations Courses are special topics courses that are listed under course number “shells” that are keyed to specific General Education Foundation (GEF) requirements. These courses are:

- HONR 202: Honors Science and Technology F2A
- HONR 203: Honors Mathematics and Quantitative Skills F3
- HONR 204: Honors Society and Connections F4
- HONR 205: Honors Human Inquiry and the Past F5
- HONR 206: Honors Arts and Creativity F6
- HONR 207: Honors Global Studies and Diversity F7

Sections will typically be capped at 25 students. Each Honors Foundations course will be offered once in each semester in an academic year and will rotate to an innovative new subject in the next academic year.

- For e.g., HONR 206A - (H01) – Material Texts

### Honors Add-on Courses

Students may register for a non-Honors course while also registering for an Honors add-on section for that class. Add-on sections allow students to delve further into coursework. By completing the regular course and the Honors add-on requirements, students receive Honors credit hours equivalent to the number of hours offered for the regular course (typically 3 hours) and the add-on (if applicable).

- For e.g.
  - BIOL 115 - (01) – Principles of General Biology
  - BIOL 298C - (H01) - Biology Add-On

Honors students  
would register for  
both these courses

## Contract Courses

Students may also receive credit for a non-Honors course by contracting it as an Honors class. By adding a deep and meaningful educational experience (usually through more intense reading requirements, a special paper, community engagement project, presentation, and/or a final project), students can receive Honors credit for the non-Honors course. In order to do this, students should contact their professor early in the semester and fill out a contract form found on our [website](#). The form, when completed, must be submitted to the Honors College office by the Friday of the 7<sup>th</sup> week of the semester. Student must earn a **B** or better for the contract to receive Honors credit for the course.

Please note the following:

- ***Contract courses are not typical until a student's second semester in the Honors College***
- ***Instructors are not obligated to complete an Honors contract***

## Contract Course Information

Applications for contracting will be reviewed on a rolling basis up until the Friday of week 7 of a given semester. The application should detail the assigned project and be reviewed with the course's instructor before submission. The Honors College does not mandate specific upper or lower limits on the work required for the contract; instructors and students should work together to devise work appropriate to the course subject and level.

Please note the following:

- ***Courses taught by graduate students are not eligible for Honors contracts. If a student, however, wishes to contract such a course they need to work with the supervising faculty member of that graduate student.***
- ***Course contracts can be created for any course (100 level and above).***

Projects should be substantive in both content and process, allowing for substantial learning and growth from students. The Honors College recommends the project complete one of the following goals:

- Formulate original ideas from student-led research
- Expand meaningfully upon the base of knowledge discussed in class
- Understand and synthesize course material through experiential learning
- Develop professional skills and self-image by implementing academic concepts in a community or professional setting

In addition, the Honors College encourages projects outside of a research paper. Full guidelines, supporting documents, and a link to the application can be found on the Honors College website.

## Cross-listed Honors Courses

A cross-listed course can provide students with the option to be exposed to enriched content within the context of a larger course. Students in cross listed Honors sections will meet, at the same time as the regular course, but the Honors section has a different syllabus with additional enrichment components. Ideally, such sections would also provide an opportunity for Honors students to collaborate or interact in some meaningful way.

- For e.g.
  - ARHS 120 – (001) – Survey of Art History 1
  - ARHS 120 – (H01) – Survey of Art History 1 ←

Honors students would register for this section

## Honors Book Study Courses

Honors book study is a special one-hour course centered on an instructor-chosen book(s). Book study courses are offered to allow students to have a different kind of class experience that is almost entirely discussion. Past book studies have been led by university presidents, the Honors College Dean, and distinguished faculty members. These courses can be either eight-week courses (starting at the beginning of the semester or mid-semester). Some are also full semester as well. Book study courses available for Fall 2024 include:

- For e.g.
  - HONR 293A - (H01) – Poverty in America
  - HONR 293D – (H01) – Swimming with JAWS
  - HONR 293E - (H01) - Innocent Yet Found Guilty
  - HONR 293K - (H02) – Peace Begins at Home
  - HONR 293V - (H02) – January 6, 2021 and After
  - HONR 293W – (H01) – A History of Oopsies
  - HONR 293X – (H01) – Changing Your Mind
  - HONR 293Y - (H01) – Guardians of Heritage
  - HONR 293Z – (H01) – Extreme Medicine

## Honors Credits for Specific Courses

Students who enroll in ENGL 103 will receive Honors credit for this course.

## Independent Study/Research

Since the Honors Foundations program is primarily coursework based, students will be allowed to use **a maximum of three credits** of research to complete program requirements. Research courses include, but are not limited to, HONR 297, HONR 397, HONR 497, HONR 498 or any discipline specific research courses. **Any research courses taken while enrolled in the Honors Foundations program can be used for a maximum of three credits (towards the 13 credit requirements) and will only count**

**as one course (towards the 5-course requirement) regardless of the number of times taken.** Please contact Associate Dean, Dr. Clement with any questions.

## **Honors Peer Leadership Programs**

### **Honors Mentor Program**

Students who have completed HONR 102 and earned a “B” or better in HONR 402: Peer Mentoring and are in good academic standing in the Honors College, can become mentors for new Honors students. Mentors help with the Honors Retreat during Welcome Week. Mentors also serve as teaching assistants for HONR 102: Introduction to Honors. Students can earn Honors credit through the mentor program by taking HONR 402: Peer Mentoring and HONR 490: Teaching Practicum. Mentors can use these credits towards a minor in Leadership Studies.

### **Honors Tutoring Program**

Students may apply to become a tutor in the testWELL Learning Center. If accepted, students must complete HONR 201: Peer Tutoring (Spring semester), HONR 301: Advanced Peer Tutoring (Fall semester) and pass a certification exam. The testWELL Learning Center is certified through the National Tutoring Association. Tutors may earn Honors credit through the tutoring program by taking HONR 201: Peer Tutoring and HONR 301: Advanced Peer Tutoring. Tutors can use these credits towards a minor in Leadership Studies.

### **testWELL Tutoring**

The testWELL Learning Center is a multi-subject learning center. This Learning Center is open Monday through Thursday from 7:00 -10:00 pm in Honors Hall or Lincoln Hall and online. All testWELL tutoring services are available free of charge to all West Virginia University undergraduate students. Tutors are members of the National Tutoring Association. Visit <https://www.honors.wvu.edu/students/resources-opportunities/testwell-tutoring> for additional information and to access the online link to meet with a tutor.

## Honors Advising

Your advisor within your major typically functions as your Honors advisor. Students must meet with their Honors advisor each semester to ensure that they are progressing academically. Many communications will instruct students to make these appointments near the **6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> week** in the semester. Go to your advising meeting prepared with questions and a potential schedule. Remember that your advisor is there to help and guide you, but ultimately you are responsible for your schedule.

Your advisor will be able to provide support in a variety of areas. You should schedule a visit with your advisor to talk about your major and career options that relate to the program, to discuss internship opportunities, and to develop/review your plan of study.

See your advisor when you have questions about your:

- Majors, minors, or certificate programs
- Schedule for the next semester or four-year degree plan
- Registration
- Academics in general

Your advisor will point you in the right direction!

If you have questions pertaining to the Honors Foundations Program that your advisor cannot answer, please feel free to reach out to the Associate Dean of the Honors College – Dr. Clement ([Damien.Clement@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Damien.Clement@mail.wvu.edu)).

## **Programming**

Being engaged and involved with student life, extracurricular, and co-curricular activities while a member of the Honors College will enhance your academic experience at West Virginia University. The Honors College faculty and staff may provide many academic, philanthropic, and social opportunities for you to get involved within the Honors community. We want you to be a leader in Honors, in your department, on campus, and in our community.

## **Living-Learning Community**

The Honors College Living-Learning Community (LLC) is composed of the Honors students living in Honors Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors of Lincoln Hall. The Honors College LLC is a community that reaches across the West Virginia University campus to provide opportunities for Honors Scholars to extend their learning beyond the classroom through trips, dinners, and special events. Founded on the idea that some of the most important interactions a student has with professors and fellow students occur outside of the classroom, the LLC is committed to providing the opportunities for these encounters to take place.

## **Honors Student Association**

Every Honors College student is a member of the Honors Student Association (HSA). This dues-free organization is designed for Honors students to have a voice in the Honors College and works to keep Honors College students connected to the Honors College as they progress through their time at West Virginia University, regardless of what year they are or where they live. In previous years, HSA has facilitated small/local community service projects, engaging academic lectures, and fun social events such as the Honors Formal at the end of each school year. Meetings are held biweekly, and students are encouraged to participate. To get involved, follow their Instagram account @wvu.hsa.

## **Honors LGBTQ+ & Allies Affinity Group**

Our LGBTQ+ and Allies Affinity Group was founded in the Fall 2019 semester to provide a time and space for our LGBTQ+ students and allies to gather and support one another and laugh and learn. In past monthly meetings, we have toured the WVU LGBTQ+ Center, hosted a board game night and a "Dollar or DIY" holiday gift exchange. We are currently working on connecting with similar groups around campus and establishing a book club focused on LGBTQ+ authors. If you have questions or would like more information about this group, email us at Honors@mail.wvu.edu.

## Appendix I: Honors Foundations Experience Timeline

### Year One

#### *First Semester:*

- Enroll in at least one Honors course in addition to HONR 102
- Check the Honors College social media and read the Honors Weekly email newsletter
- Schedule an appointment with your Honors advisor. You will meet with your advisor every semester from now until you leave West Virginia University. Contact the Honors office if you are not sure who your Honors advisor is or where you can find him/her.
- Come in and meet everyone in the Honors Office
- Become active in the Honors Student Association
- Start thinking about how you will get involved in the Honors College and life at WVU!

#### *Second Semester:*

- Enroll in at least one Honors course
- Check out the Honors College social media and read the Honors Weekly email
- Schedule an appointment with your Honors advisor
- Stay active in the Honors Student Association
- Revise your resume. What new leadership roles have you taken on?

### Year Two

#### *First Semester:*

- Enroll in at least one Honors course
- Check out the Honors College social media and read the Honors Weekly email
- Schedule an appointment with your Honors advisor
- Stay active in the Honors Student Association
- Update your resume again. What new clubs and organizations have you joined?

#### *Second Semester:*

- Enroll in at least one Honors course
- Check out the Honors College social media and read the Honors Weekly email
- Schedule an appointment with your Honors advisor
- Take on a leadership role in the Honors Student Association
- Continue to update your resume after each semester
- Participate in the required Honors exit process

Consider putting together an application for the Honors EXCEL program



## **The Honors College**

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