

**PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
HONORS COLLEGE
Information & Application Tips: Incoming Freshmen**

Q: WHAT IS THE HONORS COLLEGE?

A: The Honors College information brochure gives a basic description of the program (available upon request). The following answers to posed questions may also prove beneficial.

Q: WHEN WAS THE HISTORIC START OF THE PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE?

A: The concept of an Honors College at Pittsburg State formulated in 1986, by Dr. Donald W. Wilson; President, Dr. Robert K. Ratzlaff; Vice President for Academic Affairs, and a committee of faculty members.

The goal of recruitment, program enhancement, provision for scholarships, and student retention of superior students were viewed as key ideas in the creation of the Honors College. The University chose to expand the necessary resources to create the program, partly from the Margin of Excellence initiative of the Kansas Board of Regents. An initial class of twenty freshmen students was selected during the spring of 1987 and enrolled for the 1988 fall semester. The Transfer Scholars Program was added in 1991. The Honors College has admitted numerous high-achieving students from 1988 to the present.

Q: WHAT IS THE SIZE OF THE STUDENT BODY OF THE HONORS COLLEGE?

A: In any given academic year, the Honors College typically has between 120-130 student members. All of the Honors College students have renewable scholarships.

Q: WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES IN THESE RENEWABLE SCHOLARSHIP LEVELS?

A: Presidential Scholars include full tuition/fees, dormitory expenses or an equivalent housing stipend, and a 60% book stipend. University Scholars and two-year Transfer Honors College students receive tuition/fees scholarship. Others invited into the Honors College include a few select students who are Spiva/Timmons Scholars which covers tuition/fees and are needs based.

Q: WHO IS ON THE SELECTION COMMITTEE?

A: The Director of the Honors College, five faculty members represented from each college across campus, and two upper-level members of the Honors College.

Q: WHAT IS THE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO HONORS COLLEGE?

A:

- Thirty points for ACT
- Fifteen points for unweighted grade point average
- Ten points for class rank (10 pts. for valedictorian, 9 pts. for salutatorian, & based on percentile of class rank beyond that; i.e.: top 3%=8 pts., etc.)
- Forty-five points for subjective criteria (essay, activities, recommendations)
- Five bonus points awarded to National Merit Finalist Scholars; three points to National Merit Commended Scholars; two points for added diversity

Q: HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE SELECTED EACH FALL FOR THE PSU HONORS COLLEGE?

A: Typically twelve Presidential, twelve University, six Transfer, plus a small number of students based on other criteria (financial need or other special consideration).

Q: IF I HAVE BEEN ADMITTED TO PITT STATE AS A NEW FRESHMAN FOR THE COMING FALL SEMESTER, HAVE A 28 OR HIGHER ACT, A 3.5 OR HIGHER GPA, AND MAKE A COMPLETE APPLICATION FOR THE HONORS COLLEGE, WHAT ARE MY CHANCES OF BEING OFFERED A PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP?

A: The number of scholarships is limited. In past years, an average of between 80-120 completed applications have been received annually. Presidential scholarships were offered to the top candidates among that group. Recipients of Presidential scholarships had ACT composite scores of 29-35, and grade point averages of 3.58-4.0. Those receiving University scholarships and other awards had qualifications which were nearly as impressive.

Q: WHO, BESIDES PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS, HAVE HISTORICALLY BEEN ACCEPTED INTO THE HONORS COLLEGE?

A: Since, 1991-92, an average of four two-year community college transfers have been admitted. A minimum 3.75 GPA and 40 hours passed at the time of application are necessary to qualify to be in this pool.

Between twelve and twenty University scholarships have typically been awarded annually.

A very limited number of certain other individuals and scholarship recipients are also invited to join the Honors College.

Q: WHAT HAPPENS TO MY CREDENTIALS AND OPPORTUNITIES IF I AM NOT INITIALLY OFFERED A PLACE IN THE HONORS COLLEGE IN THE FIRST SELECTION?

A: If you have made application to PSU by submitting the application for admission and application fee, you may be eligible to apply for not only Honors College scholarships, but others scholarships, as well. Some of these scholarships are merit-based, and some are need/merit-based. Other scholarships include a variety of full or partial tuition, as well as departmental awards.

The number, monetary size, and qualifications for departmental, school and general university scholarships varies. They may be offered on a need basis, open only to students with specific credentials, students from a geographical background, or have no specific limitations. Application deadlines and scholarship descriptions are available from the Admissions Office or from the Student Financial Assistance Office. IMPORTANT NOTE: Your Honors College application packet serves as an application for Honors College scholarships ONLY. You must complete a different application to apply for other scholarships.

Q: IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO BE AWARDED MORE THAN ONE SCHOLARSHIP?

A: In many cases, yes. If you are awarded a Presidential scholarship, other scholarships (in-house) are not available. Except for Presidential Scholars, the Academic Achievement scholarship is awarded to most incoming Honors College freshmen. The PSU Scholarship committee attempts to award scholarships to as many deserving students as possible. Scholarships not associated with Pittsburg State's Financial Assistance Office (out-of-house) may have criteria set by the agency or company who awards them. The Financial Assistance Office attempts to benefit students whenever possible. In the case of select general scholarships, some students are given the option to replace awards with scholarships of greater value.

Q: SHOULD I FILL OUT A FAFSA FORM (FOR FINANCIAL NEED CONSIDERATION)?

A: Yes, especially if you are applying for Pell Grants, work-study funds, loans, or other aid in addition to scholarships. The earlier you submit FAFSA data (preferably by Feb. 1), the earlier your assessed need can be determined. Many scholarships (including Spiva/Timmons tuition scholarships) are awarded only to those who have demonstrated bona-fide need via FAFSA data. You may obtain the necessary FAFSA forms from your school counselor or from the PSU Financial Assistance Office, 103 Horace Mann. The majority of PSU students receive financial aid.

Q: WHEN WILL I FIND OUT ABOUT MY STATUS CONCERNING ACCEPTANCE INTO THE HONORS COLLEGE?

A: Selection is normally completed by March 1. You will be informed by early March if you are a recipient of a Presidential scholarship, a University scholarship, a high level alternate, or a non-recipient.

Q: MUST I LIVE IN RESIDENTIAL HOUSING AS A FRESHMAN AT PSU?

A: Yes, unless you are living at home or with a close relative, are commuting, or have been granted a waiver by the Office of Student Affairs. Honors College students have been pleased with dorm life to date; however, many Honors College students have chosen to live off-campus after their freshman year. Housing info can be obtained from University Housing (620)235-4245.

Q: WHAT IS THE TYPICAL COST OF A YEAR AT PSU?

A: PSU is a Kansas Regents institution; therefore, it is subject to fee changes, as is typical at all institutions of higher education. However, basic costs for the 2006-2007 academic year include tuition and fees of approximately \$1,895.00 per semester (Kansas resident) and \$5,560.00 per semester (non-resident of the state of Kansas). Air-conditioned, double room and 7-day access meal plan (which is the most common plan) is about \$2,422.00 per semester (other plans vary slightly in cost). Books range from \$400.00 to \$800.00, with an average of about \$600.00 per year, and incidental costs will vary according to individual taste and budget.

Q: HOW DO THESE COSTS COMPARE WITH OTHER UNIVERSITIES?

A: Total costs at Pittsburg State are substantially less than most private "liberal arts colleges," equivalent to (or lower than) most state universities, and a fraction of the expense of the "prestige name" colleges and universities. The basic thrust at Pittsburg State is on undergraduate education. Many of our programs are nationally recognized.

Q: WHAT IS THE DEPARTMENTAL HONORS PROGRAM?

A: The Departmental Honors program is for any undergraduate student who has maintained a 3.50 or higher composite GPA after completion of 110 grade points (whether enrolled in Honors College or not). Departmental faculty set criteria for projects, such as deciding which classes may be taken for departmental honors. Students must apply, complete necessary forms, etc., that the program requires. Records of projects are kept only in the departments. The Registrar's Office records completion of departmental honors courses for graduation and transcript notation. Beginning Fall 2006, all Honors College members are required to complete departmental honors in their major department.

Q: WHAT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES ARE SPONSORED BY THE HONORS COLLEGE?

A: The Honors College Association, which includes all students in the Honors College, elects class officers to plan both official and other group projects. Such projects include activities such as attendance at cultural events, picnics, volleyball, bowling, skating, canoe trips, annual awards luncheon, intramurals, fundraisers, and a variety of community service activities.

Q: WHAT GENERAL TIPS SHOULD I FOLLOW WHEN APPLYING?

A:

1. Apply for admission to Pittsburg State University. No Honors College application will be considered unless the applicant has first been admitted to PSU.
2. Apply early: ACT scores and transcripts are required for documentation.
3. Select your references carefully by making sure each will give you a strong recommendation. Additionally, give your references enough time to complete their forms and recommendation letters so these can be included in a timely fashion and mailed all in one packet by the Feb. 1 deadline date.
4. Be more cognizant of listing academic rather than other awards or activities. Be sure to include national merit scholarship nominations, regional, state, or national citations, leadership roles, and academic awards. While we may be interested in athletic prowess, cheerleading participation, homecoming royalty, church services, and volunteer work, the selection committee looks primarily at academic achievement. We are impressed by the well-rounded individual.
5. Take time to write an interesting and well-constructed essay. Poorly written essays may be a distraction to your selection. When writing your essay, be sure to make it interesting, correct, and presented in an attractive format. Your essay will be an important factor in the selection process.
6. To be eligible for PSU scholarships, file an early FAFSA and apply to PSU (necessary for most scholarship consideration). Application for consideration for Presidential and University scholarships also requires application for admission to Pitt State.
7. Be sure that your transcript reflects ACT scores, unweighted GPA, showing six or seven semesters of grades, class rank and class size. Without this information, students cannot be considered further in the review process. The application packet provides you with a transcript request form to be given to your school counselor.
8. Above all, make your application as neat as possible. This is your first impression to the selection committee and the competition often times is very close! A typed application makes a more positive impact than one that's been handwritten.

Q: IF I WANT TO TALK TO OFFICIALS OR VISIT PSU ABOUT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT?

A: A variety of approaches are possible. PSU recruitment officials may be visiting in your area or at your school, watch for notices. The Office of Admission is available to field most questions or plan visitations. Contact them at 103 Horace Mann Welcoming Center (620)235-4251. Questions concerning the Honors College can be posed in writing, on the phone, or during visitation to the Honors College 's director, Dr. Julie E. Samuels, 215C Hughes Hall (620)235-4183, jepyle-s@pittstate.edu. Arrangements can be made to visit with Dr. Samuels or Honors College students, to sit in on Honors classes, or for other considerations. PSU is very "student-friendly"!

Q: WHAT HAS BEEN THE RETENTION RATE AMONG PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY HONORS STUDENTS?

A: Literature on gifted students suggests a potentially high dropout rate in honors programs. Close screening of students, peer mentors, the availability of counseling, and close monitoring of student progress has been maintained at Pittsburg State.

Nineteen of the original 1988 class of twenty graduated. The retention rate of Honors College classes since that time has reflected a nearly ninety percent graduation rate since its inception. Currently, PSU's Honors College has a 95% retention rate. Most graduates have completed their course of study in four years, several in three.

Another sign of satisfaction is the fact that we have numerous sets of siblings who have been admitted to the Honors College since its inception and this continues to be the case today.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MOST NOTABLE AWARDS AND CAREER OPTIONS ATTAINED BY GRADUATES?

A: Outstanding male and female seniors, approximately 70 percent of Honors College students have graduated "Cum Laude" or higher, Rotary International Fellowship, Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship, Phi Kappa Phi National Fellowship, National Student Exchange Award, early admission to the University of Kansas Medical School, fellowship to the University of Kansas Law School, Fullbright Scholarship, Goldwater Fellowship, graduate admissions, fellowships and assistantships to many universities; including Harvard, Case Western, Texas A&M, Iowa, Rice, Clemson, Kansas State, Oklahoma, Arizona, Kansas, University of MO-Columbia Medical School, Nebraska, Duke, Notre Dame, Texas-Austin, University of Tulsa, Purdue and Washington Universities, multiple admissions into professional schools of medicine, law, science, engineering, psychology, etc., and entry into professional career opportunities in business, industry, teaching, and other fields.

Q: WHAT TYPE AND SIZE COMMUNITY IS PITTSBURG, KANSAS?

A: Pittsburg had an early heritage of small industrial city with coal mining, smelting, and engineering. Smelting and most of the mining are vestiges of the past. A diverse ethnic heritage has led the area of Crawford County and the surrounding area to be called the "Little Balkans." The population of Pittsburg has remained at approximately 20,000 for several decades. The population of the county is nearly double that of Pittsburg. The major employers are the University, a variety of small to medium-sized industrial plants, and the functions of a typical retail/wholesale center. A variety of stores, services, and professionals call Pittsburg home.

Hopefully this question and answer format has allowed you to become more aware of the nature of our Honors College. We have maintained high standards, high participant satisfaction, become well integrated into all facets of campus life, become known as campus leaders, and retained over ninety percent of our students. If you have further questions, please write, call, or visit.

As an outstanding student we hope that you will apply for admission to Pittsburg State, and then for potential admission to Pittsburg State University's Honors College.

**THE BEST TO YOU IN YOUR QUEST FOR COLLEGE SUCCESS!
THE PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE MAY BE JUST WHAT YOU
ARE LOOKING FOR!!**