

PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Policies and Procedures of Honors College

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SECTION 1 – The Honors College Mission Statement

Mission of the Honors College

The mission of the Honors College is to provide a more meaningful educational experience for select high-achieving students. The Honors College curriculum at the freshman-sophomore level offers intellectually stimulating general education courses. The junior-senior level Honors College students become integrated into the Academic Honors program. Students of all levels are encouraged to participate in undergraduate research, research presentation, and study abroad experiences to expand and enhance their educational experience.

Goals of the Honors College

First and foremost, the Honors College at Pittsburg State University has the goal of not only attracting high-quality applicants, but also of retaining them as high-achieving students until graduation.

A second goal is to provide educationally enriched experiences (reflected both in and out of the classroom) for the members of PSU's Honors College.

A third goal is to provide a socially responsive, supportive environment to the students in the Honors College whereby members feel personally connected to others throughout the college.

A final goal is to promote a sound start for incoming freshmen through an overnight orientation experience, enrollment in an Introduction to Honors course their first semester, and completion of a cohort community service requirement.

SECTION 2 – Leadership & Administration

The Honors College is a unit with its own budget with a Director who is administratively responsible to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Director shall work in close cooperation with the Faculty Senate Honors Subcommittee to establish and review policies and procedures for Honors College and ensure consistent application of these policies and procedures.

The Director of Honors College shall:

- (1) distribute information about Honors requirements, benefits, and awards to prospective Honors students and other interested publics through direct communication, university publications, and the university website;
- (2) in collaboration with the Honors College Committee, admit students to Honors College, maintain records concerning continued eligibility for Honors College and progress toward Honors College awards, and certify Honors College awards and degrees to the Registrar;
- (3) provide Honors academic advising;

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(4) encourage creation of and coordinate the scheduling of Honors sections of courses taught in the undergraduate colleges to satisfy general education requirements;

(5) facilitate communication within the PSU community among students, faculty, staff, and administration with regard to Honors matters;

(6) participate in the activities of the National Collegiate Honors Council.

SECTION 3 – Honors Committee

Honors College Committee of Faculty Senate

Composition: Six faculty members (one of whom shall be Director of the Honors College serving ex-officio), and two students in the Honors College Program (one from junior class, one from senior class). Faculty member terms shall be 2 years with three members selected in even numbered years and two members selected in odd numbered years.

SECTION 4 — Admission

Admission

The goal will be to admit thirty new qualified participants per year.

Entering Freshmen

Entering freshmen whose applications are submitted by January 15 prior to the fall semester in which they enter Pittsburg State University will be considered for membership.

Students must meet the following criteria to be considered for admission to The Honors College.

1. Priority Review-ACT superscore of 28 or higher SAT composite score of 1310 or higher
2. Second Consideration-ACT superscore of 27 or SAT composite score of 1280 or higher
3. Unweighted cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher
4. Meet the admission requirements as set forth by the Office of Admissions

International Students

International students must meet the following requirement to be eligible for admission:

1. 3.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale
2. ACT/SAT/National Standardized Test
3. Rank in the top 1/3 of high school graduating class
4. Minimum TOEFL Score 68 (Internet based)

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5. Recommendation from PSU International Program and Services

Selection Process

Admission to the Honors College is a process of reviewing and ranking of applications by the Honors College Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate and implemented by the Director of Honors College. It shall be competitive and based on weighted criteria as follows:

Category	Evidence	Points
Academic (40%)	HS transcript, ACT/SAT, awards list	40
Activities/Service/Employment (25%)	Listing in application and perhaps in essay and references	25
Essay (20%)	Essay	20
References (10%)	Letters or forms	10
Discretionary (5%)	Essays and references	5

Beginning in the 2010-2011 academic year, an on-campus interview process was implemented. The committee will screen applicants and narrow the pool to 44 qualified students who will be invited to campus for interviews. After interviewing with a panel of representatives, the pool will then be narrowed to the 30 students who will receive invitations for the following academic year. The interview will be worth an additional 45 points in the evaluation process.

SECTION 5-Eligibility for Continued Enrollment in the Honors College**Grade Point Averages Required**

To be eligible for continued enrollment in the Honors College freshmen must achieve at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA in their first semester of enrollment, and then maintain a 3.2 cumulative grade point average and earn not fewer than 24 credit hours per academic year. This can include summer school, though Honors College scholarships are not available in the summer session.

To be eligible for continued enrollment in the Honors College sophomores must maintain a 3.4 cumulative grade point average and earn not fewer than 24 credit hours per academic year. This can include summer school, though Honors College scholarships are not available in the summer session.

To be eligible for continued enrollment in the Honors College juniors and seniors must maintain a 3.5 cumulative GPA and earn not fewer than 28 credit hours per academic year. This can include summer school, though Honors College scholarships are not available in the summer session. The only exception to this rule would be for students in their last year/semester who do not have that many hours left to

complete their degree. As long as those students are taking courses required for their degree, it may be less than the 24 per year.

Pillar Point System

Honors College Pillar Point System Policy

Involvement in the Honors College Association enriches both the student and the Honors College program, providing opportunities for leadership, socialization, and personal growth, while bringing Honors students together for shared causes.

This Pillar Point System is designed for two reasons. First, to organize the non-academic requirements of all members of the Honors College for more efficient record keeping purposes and second, to create a reward and recognition program for those students who are more actively engaged and involved in the Honors College during their time in the program.

Compliance with the basic level pillar point system is a requirement for continued eligibility just like progress towards credits and minimum GPA. Students who do not meet the requirements will be placed on a one semester probation and if the issue is not rectified by the end of the following semester, the student will be removed from the Honors College and lose their scholarship.

Students who earn the *Level of Distinction* each of their four years in the Honors College will be recognized as such at the Annual Honors College Banquet and will receive a special medallion to wear at commencement.

Freshman Level Requirements

All freshman students will be *required* to earn a minimum of 14 points during their first year. Those points will be:

- 4 community service points (2 points each semester-1 point for each hour of service)
- 6 HCA Meeting attendance points (3 each semester*)
- 1 point for involvement in another campus organization (verification required)
- 3 points for attending HCA Social Events (1 point for each event attended)

*If a student must miss a monthly HCA meeting, they will need to make up that point through extra community service hours or attending additional social events.

Total points required for Freshman-14 to remain in good standing

By satisfying these point expectations, all freshman will automatically earn the *Level of Distinction*.

Upperclassman-Basic Level

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All upperclassman students will be required to earn a minimum of 8 points each year during their remaining years. Those points will be:

- 4 community service points (2 points each semester-1 point for each hour of service)
- 2 HCA Meeting attendance points (1 each semester*)
- 2 additional points from the list of opportunities shown below

Total points required for Upperclassman-8 to remain in good standing**Upperclassmen-Level of Distinction**

In order for upperclassmen to earn the *Level of Distinction*, they must fulfill the 8 points required of the basic level, and an additional 6 points for a total of 14 points during the academic year.

Points may be earned according to the following list of activities:

- HCA Meeting Attendance-1 point for each meeting attended
- Additional HCA Community Service-1 point per hour of service
- 4 points for effectively serving as an executive officer of the HCA
- 3 points for effectively serving as a Peer Mentor
- 3 points for effectively serving as a team leader for the academic year
- 2 points for effectively serving as a project leader for the academic year
- 1 point for effectively serving as a class representative for the academic year
- 1 point for attending an HCA social event
- 1 point for serving effectively as an officer of another campus organization. Maximum of 2 points for the academic year, and it must be verified by the advisor

*Exceptions of policy for special circumstances may be awarded at the discretion of the Director.

Notes

- In order for a student to achieve *Level of Distinction* at graduation, they must have received *Level of Distinction* in each of their years in the Honors College
- All record keeping of points will be done in the CANVAS Honors College account so that students can always see where they are toward point accumulation
- Points are accumulated on a yearly basis. Points do not roll over from year to year
- All communication regarding the point system should be done through the HCA Gmail account

Policies and Procedures of The Honors College**Review of Records and Notification of Ineligible Students**

At the end of each semester, the Director of the Honors College shall review the academic records of all Honors College students. Students who failed to achieve the requisite grade point average for their level will be notified by email that a one-semester probation is granted. Students who have received a one-semester probation and have failed to earn the requisite cumulative grade point average will be dismissed from the Honors College and will receive communication from the Director of Honors College.

Appeals Committee for Extraordinary Circumstances

At the time students are notified of their ineligibility to continue in the Honors College, they will be informed of their right to appeal for continued probation. The Student Honors Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate will consider the appeal. The decision will be final.

General Education Honors Sections

The Director of Honors College will work in conjunction with Department Chairpersons to create a revolving schedule of general education courses that will be offered as honors sections. Maximum enrollment for an Honors College course is 25 students. Honors sections may cover more sophisticated material than that covered in regular sections of the same course, more active student participation is encouraged, and the method of evaluation of students' work (examinations, reports, etc.) may differ.

Honor 200: Introduction to Honors

Successful completion of **Honor 200: Introduction to Honors** for 1 hour credit. The course is designed to familiarize the new students to the organizational structure and operations of the Honors College, help them understand the various requirements for continuation in good standing, and provide a framework of the possible experiences and programs they can choose to further enhance their honors education.

Requirements for Honors Credits

All Honors College students must earn a total of 21 honors credits, excluding Introduction to Honors, to graduate in good standing. These credits can be earned through honors gen ed courses, honors engagement project contracts, approved study abroad experiences, participation in the Research Colloquium as long as participation is not required for their degree, non-required graduate classes, the Academic Honors Program, or completing both semesters of the Senior Honors Project.

All freshman members of the Honors College (HC) must complete a minimum of six honors credits by the end of their first year to be a member in good standing. Any variants to this requirement must be discussed with the Director. Failure to meet this requirement will be cause for probationary status for the first semester of the sophomore year. Failure to meet this requirement by the end of the first semester of the sophomore year will result in dismissal from the Honors College and loss of scholarship.

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All sophomore members of the HC must have completed 12 honors credits by the end of their second year to be a member in good standing. Any variants to this requirement must be discussed with the Director. Failure to meet this requirement will be cause for probationary status for the first semester of the junior year. Failure to meet this requirement by the end of the first semester of the junior year will result in dismissal from the HC.

All junior members of the HC must have completed 18 honors credits by the end of their third year to be a member in good standing. Any variants to this requirement must be discussed with the Director. Failure to meet this requirement will be cause for probationary status for the first semester of the senior year. Failure to meet this requirement by the end of the first semester of the senior year will result in dismissal from the HC.

SECTION 6-General Information Regarding Honors Course Offerings**Faculty Teaching Honors Sections**

Only persons holding tenured or tenure-track faculty appointments shall teach honors courses. Exceptions to this required recommendation may be made by the department chair and with the approval of the Director of Honors College.

Content and Grading in Honors Sections

Honors sections may cover more sophisticated material than that covered in regular sections of the same course, more active student participation may be required, and the method of evaluation of students' work (examinations, reports, etc.) may differ. The grading standards should not be designed to force the honors students to compete among themselves for a limited number of "A" or "B" grades regardless of their level of performance. Instead, grades should be assigned based on the quality of their work – in comparison with the overall expectations of student performance for the course (in regular and honors sections).

Enrollment in Honors Sections

Only undergraduate students eligible to participate in the Honors College may enroll in honors sections of general education courses.

Maximum Enrollment

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The anticipated maximum enrollment for an Honors College course is 25 students, provided however that the Director of Honors College may, with the approval of the responsible department head, permit additional enrollment when it is likely that the normal attrition of the drop-and-add process will bring the maximum size to 25 students early in the semester or when requested to do so in special circumstances by the Dean of the College offering the course.

Evaluation of Honors Courses

All faculty members teaching honors sections shall be encouraged to participate in the course evaluation process established by the University.

SECTION 7 – Privileges Earned by Members in Honors College**Priority Enrollment**

The Director of Honors College shall report to the Registrar, through appropriate channels, the names and student identification numbers of those students who meet the definition of an active Honors College student during a given semester and who therefore qualify for early enrollment for the next academic semester and/or summer session.

Active Honors College students will have 30 hours added on to their total completed hours and then enroll in the appropriate cohort according to the university enrollment schedule.

Study Abroad

Pittsburg State University has a wide range of Study Abroad Program opportunities designed for undergraduate and graduate students. Students may choose to travel for a few weeks to one or more countries with group program options or plan an individual study abroad experience for a semester or full academic year.

Honors College students who are in good standing will receive a one-time study abroad stipend in the amount of \$2,000 for a PSU approved study abroad program.

Freshman in a four year degree program may not use their Honors College Study Abroad stipend until the beginning of their sophomore year. Students in a two year degree program such as Pre-Pharmacy or the two year auto technology degree may use their stipends during their first year if desired.

Membership in the Honors College Association

All members of the Honors College are automatically members of the Honors College Association, a recognized student organization through the Campus Activities Association. Monthly meetings provide

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students the opportunity to become involved in numerous campus activities and can also provide excellent leadership opportunities for those who choose to become involved on a higher level.

SECTION 8-FUNDING GUIDELINES

Presidential Award-\$9,500 per year for four consecutive years plus a one-time Study Abroad Stipend of up to \$2,000 for a total four year package of \$40,000.

Note: Presidential Scholars cannot receive any admission based awards (AAA, Valedictorian, Diversity) on top of their Honors College award, however, they can receive college or departmental awards up to the cost of attendance.

University Award-\$4,500 per year for four consecutive years plus a one-time Study Abroad Stipend of up to \$2,000 for a total four year package of \$20,000.

Note: University Scholars can receive admission based scholarships up to the cost of tuition and fees, as well as college or departmental awards up to the cost of attendance. The Academic Achievement Award will be the first admission based scholarship applied.

Crimson and Gold Scholars- \$1,000 per year for four consecutive years plus a one-time Study Abroad Stipend of up to \$2,000, for a total four year package of \$6,000.

In the event that any part of this policy statement related to Honors College scholarships conflicts with University Scholarship Policy, the latter takes precedent.