Iowa State University Honors Program

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Iowa State University sponsors both a First-Year Honors Program (FHP) and a University Honors Program (UHP). FHP provides an introduction to Honors education at Iowa State for highly talented students entering their first year. The UHP, to which any qualified undergraduate may apply, emphasizes the development of an enriched, individualized program of study that meets each student’s needs, interests, and abilities.

Overview of Honors

UHP aims to provide

- An **intellectually stimulating environment** for high-ability, high-achieving students.
- Ways for excellent students to make the most of their college experience by achieving a degree of **breadth and depth** not always available to undergraduates.
- Opportunities for **interaction between faculty and students** through courses and seminars, undergraduate research experiences, and mentoring.
Your experience with the University Honors Program will be unique to you. There are a number of requirements that all students fulfill in order to graduate with Honors, but the way in which you choose to fulfill those requirements will not necessarily be the same as other students in the Honors Program. This is your opportunity to tailor your education to your own unique interests and goals!

**Your Honors Experience**

- Attend an Honors orientation session in their college
- Maintain a cumulative ISU GPA of 3.5 or better
- Submit a Program of Study no later than four semesters before graduation (generally, spring of sophomore year. Students who join UHP with 48 - 60 credits remaining before graduation submit the Program of Study at the time of their application.)
- Complete two Honors courses and two Honors Seminars
- Submit an Honors Project Proposal, usually during sophomore or junior year, and no later than one semester before graduation
- Complete an Honors Project and present at an Honors Poster Session

**Important:** some Colleges also ask that you fulfill breadth and depth requirements in addition to the things listed above. Details on Honors Requirements for each of the Colleges can be found [here](#).

**General Honors Requirements**

To remain in Honors, FHP students must submit a letter of intent indicating that they will continue into the UHP before the announced deadline (typically around the second week of the spring semester). The Degree Plan assignment in HON 121 does not complete the application process for admission to the UHP; a letter of intent must be submitted when joining UHP as an FHP member.

Once a part of the UHP, students must complete the following to graduate with Honors:

- Attend an Honors orientation session in their college
- Maintain a cumulative ISU GPA of 3.5 or better
- Submit a Program of Study no later than four semesters before graduation (generally, spring of sophomore year. Students who join UHP with 48 - 60 credits remaining before graduation submit the Program of Study at the time of their application.)
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- Submit an Honors Project Proposal, usually during sophomore or junior year, and no later than one semester before graduation
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Honors General Timeline

Joined Honors as a First-Semester First-Year Student

First-Year Honors Program
• LIB 160
• ENGL 250H
• HON 121

Creating Your Honors Path
• First-Year Mentor Program (HON 290H)
• Submit your Letter of Intent
• Honors courses & seminars
• FHP Leader position
• Honors Student Board (HSB)
• Potential service learning opportunities
• Learn about prestigious scholarships

Starting UHP
• Attend your College Honors Program orientation session

Before Graduating with Honors
• Complete Honors Project if you have not
• Participate in an Honors Poster Presentation
• Potentially participate in the Undergraduate Research Symposium

Submit your POS to your College Honors Committee if you have not
Meet with faculty/your advisor to start planning your Honors project
Submit your Honors project proposal

Submit your Honors Project proposal if you have not
Complete Honors Project if you submitted your proposal the previous semester
Potentially participate in the Undergraduate Research Symposium

Attend your College Honors Program orientation session if you have not
Contact your College Honors Advisor to start planning/submit your POS
Prepare to apply for prestigious scholarships and fellowships
Honors General Timeline

Joined ISU Honors After First Semester of College

For all Honors students: these are general guidelines. You should check with your Honors adviser or an Honors staff member to review your specific timeline.

**First Year of College (UHP)**
- **FALL**
  - Starting UHP
    - Meet with Honors staff or advisers to review Honors requirements and ask questions
    - Attend your College Honors Program orientation/information session
    - Learn about prestigious scholarships/fellowships

- **SPRING**
  - Attend your College Honors Program orientation session if you have not
  - Contact your College Honors Advisor to start planning/submit your POS
  - Prepare to apply for prestigious scholarships and fellowships

* or when you join Honors

**Second Year of College (UHP)**
- **FALL**
  - Submit your POS to your College Honors Committee if you have not
  - Meet with faculty/your advisor to start planning your Honors project
  - Submit your Honors project proposal

**Third Year of College (UHP)**
- **FALL**
  - Submit your Honors Project proposal if you have not
  - Complete Honors Project if you submitted your proposal the previous semester
  - Potentially participate in the Undergraduate Research Symposium

**SPRING**
- Complete Honors Project if you have not already
- Participate in an Honors Poster Presentation
- Potentially participate in the Undergraduate Research Symposium

**Fourth+ Year of College (UHP)**
- Complete Honors Project if you have not already
- Participate in an Honors Poster Presentation
- Potentially participate in the Undergraduate Research Symposium

Before Graduating with Honors
- Complete Honors Project if you have not already
- Participate in an Honors Poster Presentation
- Potentially participate in the Undergraduate Research Symposium
You don’t have to go through Honors alone! There are many different resources on campus to help guide you through your Upper Division Honors Program experience. Click the links below to meet the staff members on campus who are here to help you succeed in Honors!

Honors Staff
College Based Honors Liaisons

Don’t forget that the Honors website and the Honors Office are always a good place to start when you have a question about Honors. You can find the Honors Office on the second floor of the Jischke Honors Building. Feel free to stop by with questions or just to chat!

You can also keep up with all things Honors through our social media and blog!
A major way for UHP members to make the most of college is by designing an individualized Program of Study (POS). Making your Program of Study is not as complicated as it may seem! Remember this is just your plan for graduating with Honors and fulfilling the Honors Requirements. With it, Honors students develop a set of courses and out-of-class experiences (for example, study abroad) that help them achieve their goals.

With the help of your advisers, get creative when designing your POS - it should be as unique as you are! You will turn in your completed POS to an office specific to your college. Please check the website for your college for this location. The Honors committee for your college is responsible for approving the POS. These committees evaluate the POS for depth, breadth, and incorporation of Honors requirements.

Deadlines for turning in your POS are as follows:
- **Fall Semesters** - September 21
- **Spring Semesters** - February 21

**Important**: your POS should be turned in no later than the spring semester of your sophomore year if you joined as a first year, and the semester which you joined the Honors Program if you joined after your first semester of college.

Each college has a slightly different format for their POS form. Click below to look at the form for your college:
Starting your POS? Here’s an overview of what yours should include and how to figure out your best path towards graduating with Honors!

Ask yourself these questions:

- Are there Honors sections of any of my general education or major courses?
- Do I want to take a 500+ level graduate course?
- Do I want to turn a non-Honors class into an Honors course through the Contracting process?
- When do I want to take my Honors seminars? (Don’t leave them until your last semester!)
- When will I have time in my schedule to fit my seminars in?
- When do I want to do my Honors project? (Remember, you’ll need to submit this proposal at least one semester before you plan on starting your project)

Then Plan to do These 5 Things:

- Take at least 2 Honors Courses
- Take at least 2 Honors Seminars
- Submit an Honors Project Proposal to your college
- Complete and present Honors Project
- Fulfill breadth and depth requirements
Honors Courses are a great way for you to tailor your major curriculum to fit your educational interests and goals. There are a number of ways to take your two required Honors Courses:

Take a section of a course that is already designated as Honors:
- To search for available Honors sections, visit the University Schedule of Classes, select the desired term, click on “Toggle Advanced Search,” check “Show All Sections,” and enter “Honors” in the title/keyword search.
- These tend to be smaller sections that use collaborative groups to engage more deeply with course material.

Turn a non-Honors course into an Honors section through “contracting”:
- Some classes have standing contracts that use a pre-defined Honors component. Check with honors@iastate.edu to see which classes have standing contracts this semester.
- You can also submit an individual contract for any course offered by ISU.
- The course contracting form should be submitted by the end of the fourth week of classes the semester in which you are contracting the course.
- See examples here.

Take graduate level course work:
- Talk to your academic adviser your junior or senior year about registering for 500+ level course work in a field you are interested in.
Honors Seminars

Do you want to learn about weird topics in a small section of only other Honors students? We have you covered!

Honors Seminars are generally 1-2 credit Pass/Not Pass courses designed to get you thinking about and discussing a wide array of topics with your fellow Honors students. You are required to take at least 2 to graduate with Honors, but many students end up taking more as time allows!

Things to know about Seminars:

- You register for Honors seminars after you register for other courses each semester, and the “start date” for Honors Seminar registration is the same for all Honors members.
- Reference numbers for the seminars will be posted on the Honors program website 1-3 days before the seminar registration start date.
- You use AccessPlus to register for a seminar, just as you do for regular courses.
- When you try to register for a seminar that is already full, you will be automatically added to a wait list. As seats become available in that seminar, an Honors staff member will email students on the wait list to fill the open seats.
Honors Project

It is never too early to start thinking about your Honors Project! You will need to submit your Honors Project proposal no later than one semester before graduation. However, completing your project earlier rather than later can help supplement graduate school applications, job applications, etc. Make your Honors Project work for you and your goals!

Here are some guiding questions to help you start your Honors Project proposal:

- Are there any faculty that I would really like to work with on this project?
- Is there something that could boost my graduate school/job applications that I could do for my project?
- Is there something I am passionate about that I have not been able to fit into my curriculum at ISU?
- Have I talked to any of the Honors staff about my ideas?
- Have I looked at the digital repository to see past examples of Honors Projects?

Honors Project Proposals should be submitted the semester before you plan to work on your project. The deadlines are:

- Fall Semesters - September 21
- Spring Semesters - February 21

Ask yourself these questions related to your Honors Project and presentation:

- Have I let Honors know when I will be presenting my project at a Poster Presentation?
- Have I registered for a section of 490H if I am doing my project for credit?

Do you have more questions? Talk to the Honors Staff or your College Liaison!
Get Involved!

Looking to become more involved in the Honors community? Check out these opportunities to connect:

- Honors Student Board
- Honors Housing
- Honors Ambassadors
- Honors Peer Advisers
- National Awards
- Undergraduate Research