

University Honors College

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The University Honors College is an interdisciplinary program with courses leading to a certificate of completion in University Honors.

The University Honors College offers special courses and activities designed to help qualified students realize their full intellectual potential and to provide them the best possible preparation for their major degree programs. It does so through a wide range of special classes and interdisciplinary seminars supported by departments and faculty across campus.

The College recognizes its students in a variety of ways. Students have the option of selecting an Honors Certificate program in either Interdisciplinary Studies or Experiential Learning. Students who complete at least two courses in the Program while maintaining minimum Honors and cumulative grade point averages of 3.2 receive recognition at VSU's annual Honors Day. A student who completes all certificate requirements also receives recognition at Honors Day and at graduation ceremonies. In addition, the student receives a Certificate of University Honors and special notation on official university transcripts.

Admission into the Honors College is based on a composite score. The composite is factored using SAT or ACT scores, high school GPA, and a writing sample from the Honors application. The minimum requirements for acceptance are SAT 1170 (CR + M) or ACT composite of 26 or higher; high school GPA of 3.2. Current students who achieve a 3.2 GPA or better may be considered. Provisional acceptance into the Honors College is granted to students meeting the high school GPA requirement with an acceptable writing sample. Provisionally accepted students must maintain a GPA of 3.2 in their first year of courses.

Requirements for Graduation with the Certificate in University Honors

- 24-28 hours in the Honors Curriculum as designated below
- 3.2 or higher cumulative GPA, and a 3.0 or higher GPA in Honors curriculum courses. Students failing to meet the GPA requirement will have a one-semester probation period to continue their enrollment in the Honors College.

Global Experience and Understanding Requirement

All students in the Honors College must complete the Global Experience and Understanding requirement with an approved research activity, service learning assignment, or field experience.

In the spirit of the Honors interdisciplinary approach, research, service, and minor program activities will be considered as fulfillment of the Global Experience and Understanding requirement. As a semester-long commitment, the requirement serves to foster faculty mentoring and an understanding of cultural and global issues. These activities must be approved by the Honors College.

Selected Educational Outcomes

1. Students will learn the arts of inquiry and conversation, culminating in structured research and creative endeavors, academic writing, oral presentations, and creative production.
2. Students will practice the organizational skills of collaboration, planning, and assessment, and the personal skills of self-discipline and task management, culminating in the capacity to guide or direct group-based work.
3. Students will understand the importance of civic involvement and giving back to the larger community, culminating in occasions of service that draw upon scholarship, creativity, and leadership capacities.
4. Students will incorporate an understanding of diverse global and cultural perspectives in their scholarly or creative inquiry.
5. Students will incorporate an understanding of diverse disciplinary perspectives in their scholarly/creative inquiry, culminating in a collaborative, interdisciplinary project.

Examples of Outcome Assessments

1. Students will provide evidence of their accomplishments related to each area of the five educational outcomes previously listed and present the evidence in a portfolio.
2. Students will participate in at least one research/creative endeavor forum to present their work.
3. Students will provide evidence of their understanding of global perspectives.
4. Students will provide documentation and reflection on at least one sustained community service activity.
5. Students will complete a capstone project that will be presented at an interdisciplinary forum.

The Honors College offers a seminar and an independent study course (HONS 4000), which may satisfy elective credit or, in some cases, capstone requirements in a variety of major degree programs (must be approved by the Honors College Dean).

Courses not listed as Honors may also be available for Honors credit through the Honors Option. This option allows students to receive Honors credit while enrolled in regular courses by doing different types of assignments approved in advance by the instructor of the course and the Honors College Dean. Honors Options must be approved no later than the last day of the second week of classes.

Requirements for the Certificate in University Honors in Interdisciplinary Studies

First Year

HONS 1990	Honors Introductory Seminar	2
Two core Honors courses		5-8

Second Year

Select one of the following:		2
PERS 2170H	Honors Human Nature/Human Futures	
PERS 2160H	Honors Perspectives on Leadership	
PERS 2315H	Honors Narrative and Identity	
PERS 2330H	Honors Women in the Visual Arts	
One core Honors course or one Honors major course		3-4

Third Year

HONS 3999	Introduction to Honors Research	3
or HONS 3990	Honors Capstone Seminar	
Two Honors major courses		6

Fourth Year

HONS 4990	Honors Senior Portfolio	3
Total Hours		24-28

The Experiential Learning program is designed to provide students with enhanced opportunities in applied research and problem solving in a practice setting. The requirements align with successful completion of certifications in fields such as nursing and education but also in practice-based disciplines such as business and the arts. The program culminates in a series of service learning activities and community outreach.

In place of additional course requirements, the Experiential Learning program is competency-based with assessments in the ePortfolio. Students are required to take the Experiential Learning section of HONS 1990, during which students develop a plan of study and a prospectus for projects and outcomes. The Honors College provides specific guidelines for service learning projects to establish objectives and assessments of the activities. Students are required to complete 45 service hours for each experiential learning activity.

Examples of service learning activities include:

- community outreach
- Study abroad or semester exchanges
- Career-shadowing and mentoring
- Internships
- Undergraduate research or professional scholarship
- Leadership activities
- Creative activities and performances

Requirements for the Certificate in University Honors in Experiential Learning

HONS 1990	Honors Introductory Seminar (First semester)	2
PERS 2xxxH		2
HONS 2010	Honors Colloquium (Second or third year)	2
HONS 4990	Honors Senior Portfolio (Final semester)	2
Completion of six semester-long approved experiential learning activities		