THE HONORS COLLEGE

http://www.uvm.edu/honorscollege

The Honors College (HC) offers an intensely focused, academically challenging environment for some of the university’s most outstanding undergraduate students. The Honors College involves a broad cross-section of the university community, existing not as a cloistered academic enclave but as a vital part of that larger community. The Honors College is above all a community of scholars—students and faculty—committed to the ideals of excellence in scholarship, academic rigor, and intellectual inquiry and engagement.

ADMISSION TO THE HONORS COLLEGE

Admission to the Honors College is based on prior academic performance and is gained through one of two avenues. First-year students may be invited to the HC based on the strength of their application to the university; no additional application is required. Approximately 225 first-year students comprise each year’s class. Because the college exists to recognize and encourage academic excellence, it also welcomes applications for admission from sophomores who were not in the HC in their first year, but were among the top performers as first-year students at UVM. Sophomore admission requires an application form, a 3.40 grade-point average at the end of the first year, a letter of recommendation from a UVM faculty member, and a brief essay. Up to 100 sophomores are admitted annually. Students transferring into their first or second year at UVM should contact the Honors College office to express their interest.

CURRICULUM

Honors College students have “dual citizenship”: they are members of both the HC and one of the seven undergraduate degree granting schools and colleges. The Honors College supplements and enriches degree offerings with seminars that broaden intellectual horizons and stimulate discussion, debate, writing, research and reflection. Honors College courses are taught by distinguished faculty drawn from the range of academic disciplines at UVM. Enrollment in seminars for first-year and sophomore students is limited to Honors College students. HC courses often count towards fulfilling degree requirements. Students who complete all Honors College curricular requirements, in addition to the degree requirements of their home school or college, graduate as Honors College Scholars.

The First-Year Seminars

First-year Honors College students take a two-course sequence, HCOL 085 (taught in the fall), and HCOL 086 (taught in the spring). The fall semester seminar provides a common experience for all first-year students in the Honors College. This course examines knowledge acquisition from the perspective of different disciplines through reading and discussion of classic works and contemporary writings. It is taught in small seminars (about 20 students in each section) intended to promote intellectual dialogue. The seminar, which fulfills the university’s first-year writing requirement, encourages students to develop their reasoning and sharpen their focus through their writing. The course is supplemented by plenary lectures by professionals, visiting faculty and university faculty; the entire university community is invited to these lectures. The spring semester, a follow-up to the fall class, offers a choice of seminars that build on the skills and knowledge developed during the fall semester. Many spring seminars are on the theme of diversity, allowing students to progress toward completing the university’s diversity requirements.

Sophomore Seminars

Sophomores take two three-credit seminars, one in the fall and one in the spring, selected from an extensive slate of offerings created for HC students by faculty in schools and colleges university-wide. Topics vary from year to year. Unlike the first year curriculum, the fall and spring sophomore seminars are not sequential.

Junior and Senior Year

Typically, in the junior year, students take a minimum of three credits of course work in their home school or college that prepares them for their senior year Honors thesis project. Senior students complete a six-credit research thesis or senior project approved by their home school or college. Requirements for both years vary across the schools and colleges.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

A cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of 3.20 is required for first year and sophomore students to remain in good standing in the Honors College. Beyond the sophomore year, a cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of 3.40 is required for all Honors College students at the time of thesis proposal in their home college. The student must maintain a GPA of 3.40 or higher to graduate as an Honors College Scholar.

Process for Grade Review

At the end of each semester the Honors College Dean (in consultation with the college’s Academic Standards Committee) reviews academic records of Honors College students eligible for academic probation or dismissal. In that meeting the Dean makes a decision for each student under consideration for academic trial or dismissal. Students under consideration for trial or dismissal receive notification of their academic standing in the Honors College within 10 business days of the posting of final semester grades. Students who are notified of dismissal have the opportunity to appeal the decision.

Questions about good standing, academic trial, or dismissal can be directed to the Honors College at 802-656-9100 or honors.college@uvm.edu.

Criteria for Academic Trial

First-year and sophomore students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.20 will be given one semester of academic trial to raise their GPA to at least a 3.20. Academic trial in the Honors College consists of regular meetings with Honors College academic advising staff, as well as work with other academic support programs determined to be
an important part of student success. After one semester of academic probation student academic records will be reviewed again by the Honors College Dean and Academic Standards Committee. Students who raise their GPA above a 3.20 will be removed from probation. Students who fail to bring their GPA above a 3.20 will be subject to dismissal from the Honors College. The Dean may take personal or academic considerations into account prior to dismissal for any student on trial.

**Criteria for Honors College Dismissal**

Students who are not successful in bringing their cumulative GPA above the 3.20 level after a semester of academic trial are eligible for dismissal. In addition, the following situations may warrant a student dismissal from the Honors College:

- Lack of a cumulative GPA of 3.40 at the time a student submits their thesis proposal. Students must then maintain a GPA of 3.40 or higher to graduate as an Honors College Scholar.
- Receipt of grades of C- or below for more than eight credits of coursework.
- Offenses committed against the academic integrity code, as determined by standard university procedures.
- A failing grade in an Honors College seminar.
- Lack of satisfactory progress toward the completion of Honors College requirements are subject to dismissal from the Honors College.

The Dean may take personal or academic considerations into account prior to dismissal for any of the situations listed above. Such considerations are on a case-by-case basis.

Students who are dismissed have the opportunity to appeal the decision in writing, and they receive information on the appeal process in their dismissal notification. To appeal, students must e-mail their appeal to the Honors College Dean within five business days of receiving their notification of dismissal. The Dean (in consultation with the Academic Standards Committee) will review all appeals within five business days of receiving the appeal. Students will then hear of their final Honors College status from the Honors College Dean.

Once dismissed from the Honors College, students will be disenrolled from any Honors College courses no later than the end of the first week of classes. **There is no possible re-entry for students who are dismissed (post-appeal) from the Honors College.**

**How to Obtain Additional Information**

Contact the Honors College at 802-656-9100 or honors.college@uvm.edu.

**RESIDENTIAL COMPONENT**

The Honors College is housed in a residential complex at University Heights. This beautiful facility provides housing for HC students, as well as permanent office space for the HC administration and staff. In addition, the complex includes classroom space, lounges, and meeting spaces for the Honors College. Students are strongly encouraged (but not required) to live in the Honors College residence.

**CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

All UVM faculty and students and the general public are invited to participate in frequent Honors College events such as lectures and symposia presented by faculty, students, and distinguished visiting scholars and artists.

**FELLOWSHIP AND UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SUPPORT**

The Honors College provides special advising for students throughout UVM, not just the Honors College, in two areas. The Office of Undergraduate Research advises undergraduates interested in pursuing research under the mentorship of a faculty member by maintaining a database of research opportunities and administering funding programs. The Office of Fellowships Advising, also housed in the Honors College, provides mentoring for students applying for nationally competitive fellowships and scholarships (e.g., Fulbright, Truman, Udall, Goldwater, and Rhodes).

**PLAN OF STUDY**

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<th>First Year</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HCOL 085 Honors College First Year Sem (Fulfills University FY Writing Requirement and may count toward specific degree requirements in home college/school)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCOL 086 Honors College First Year Sem (may count toward specific degree requirements in home college/school)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Sophomore</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>HCOL 186 Honors College Sophomore Sem (may count toward specific degree requirements in home college/school)</td>
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<td>Year Total:</td>
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### Junior

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<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
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1-3 credits related to research and thesis preparation, offered in the home college/school (may be completed either fall or spring).

Year Total: 1-3 1-3

### Senior

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<td>Fall</td>
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A total of six credits of honors thesis must be taken over two semesters. May count toward specific degree requirements.

Year Total: 3 3

Total Credits in Sequence: 20-24