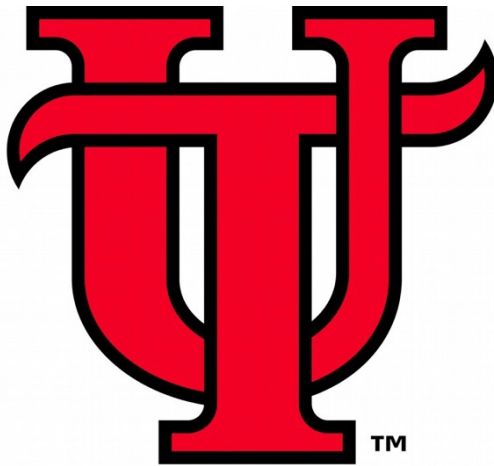


THE HONORS PROGRAM HANDBOOK  
Information for Honors Program Students



# HONORS PROGRAM

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## **Mission Statement**

The Honors Program of The University of Tampa aims to 1) attract excellent students to the university and 2) enhance their achievement by creating an intellectually stimulating environment, 3) foster their critical thinking skills, 4) increase their capacities as global citizens, and 5) help them become scholars and intellectuals.

## **Features of the Honors Program**

Founded in 1982, the cornerstones of the Program include academic achievement, global perspective, and critical thinking. To foster its aims, the UT Honors Program offers special courses as well as Honors sections of select courses from the regular university curriculum.

The Honors Program also offers Pathways to Honors for new freshmen members; Honors Enrichment Tutorials; Honors Research Fellowships; Honors Study Abroad Scholarships; the Honors Symposia series; conferences; field trips; special learning experiences at the University of Oxford in England; themed, regular, and study abroad courses taught by UT Honors faculty.

## **The Honors Pledge**

*We, the students of the Honors Program at The University of Tampa, pledge to follow a life of the mind, to devote ourselves fully to intellectual growth and to take responsibility for our own education. We pledge to never stop pursuing the wonder-filled questions of the world, to never stop challenging the academic status quo, and to never choose expediency over excellence. We pledge to work with the faculty to establish an environment of academic integrity and mutual respect and to create and maintain an Honors community that fosters freedom of expression and discovery. By choosing to become a part of this community we each promise to uphold the principles recognized in this statement.*

## Admissions Requirements

Incoming freshmen are automatically considered for the Honors Program when they are accepted for admission to The University of Tampa. As is the case for all UT applications, the Admissions Review Committee at The University of Tampa reviews completed student applications holistically. We define holistic admission as examining the entire student application file, the whole person and the context of the student's environment. Academic accomplishment is clearly the dominating factor when evaluating students and making admissions decisions. However, there are many relevant criteria that may outweigh certain academic factors when UT decides to accept a student to the Honors Program. We are particularly interested in student character, work ethic, leadership, willingness to help others and academic challenge. The following provides examples that will demonstrate what we look for with respect to a student's academic potential and strength of character, the two main areas of review during our evaluation process:

### ACADEMIC REVIEW:

- Quality of grades
- Quality of grades related to prospective major (e.g., chemistry grades for a forensic science major, etc.)
- Strength and performance of coursework completed (number of AP, IB, AICE or dual enrollment courses taken and performance in these courses)
- Academic challenge (number of AP, IB, AICE or dual enrollment attempted, irrespective of grades)

### CHARACTER REVIEW:

- Work ethic, as exemplified by balancing academic and extracurricular challenge (e.g., strong grades coupled with significant and meaningful extracurricular or work activity)
- Empathy and kindness toward others (e.g., community service, taking care of family in need, etc.)

- Extracurricular activity and accomplishment (e.g., orchestra, band, theatre, honors societies, club involvement, athletics, performing arts, etc.)
- Independence (e.g., overnight travel, camps, after-school or summer employment, student-initiated communication with the University versus parents communicating, etc.)
- Leadership (e.g., president, treasurer, co-captain, MVP, first-chair instrumental, etc.)

The Honors Program at UT is also Test Optional. We do not require test scores for admission to the University or in our scholarship award process. Instead of tests, we concentrate on other metrics previously mentioned here. While a student may send test scores if they desire, such scores are not necessary during the application and admissions process at UT.

Transfer students who have not completed an Associate's Degree will be considered for the Honors Program on a case-by-case basis should they express interest.

Acceptance into the Honors Program by Admissions results in students being "Honors Eligible." There is a required application for full enrollment as an Honors Student for all admitted Honors Eligible students upon completion of HON 102 and for transfer students with fewer than 60 credit hours after the completion of their first Honors course.

Application for full enrollment as an Honors Student for continuing students is highly competitive.

Students must formally apply to the program (all Honors applications are online; see the link at the back of the Handbook). For first-year students completing HON 101 and HON 102, applications are due the Friday before classes end in the Spring Semester. For continuing students, applications are due the Friday before classes end in order to be considered for the Honors Program for the subsequent semester. Students may re-apply to the Honors Program after one semester if their application is denied.

To be eligible to make application for full enrollment as an Honors Student:

1. A first-year, non-transfer student (regardless of credit hours) must have successfully completed Pathways to Honors 101/102 with a grade of B or better in both HON 101 and HON 102, and must include a recommendation from at least one UT professor. If a student fails to complete HON 101 with a grade of B or better, but does complete HON 102 with a grade of A, AB or B, then an additional letter of

recommendation is required from a professor who has taught the student during the spring semester. Approval of the application, in all instances, is up to the discretion of the Honors Program Director and Associate Director.

2. A newly admitted transfer student must apply to continue in Honors after their first semester at UT.

3. A continuing UT student who wishes to enroll in Honors who was not admitted as a freshman or transfer student must have a cumulative UT GPA of 3.5, cannot have more than 60 credit hours, and must formally apply to the program and be recommended by a UT faculty member.

### **Requirements for Maintaining “Good Standing” in Honors**

Freshmen in the Honors Program are required to maintain a GPA of at least 3.25; beyond the freshman year, students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.50. Those who fail to maintain the requisite level of grades will be placed on probationary status for one semester. While on probationary status, students may continue to register for Honors courses and for Honors Enrichment Tutorials, but they are prohibited from applying for any Honors opportunities that involve monetary support. If they raise their grades to the required standard within the semester following probationary notice, they will return to good standing. Students who remain below the required level for more than one semester will be dismissed from the Honors Program. They may then reapply for admission to the program once they achieve a cumulative UT GPA of 3.5 or greater.

Honors Program students are required to attend at least four (4) Honors Program symposia per academic year.

Students found responsible for an academic integrity violation will be dismissed from the Honors Program and will not be eligible to graduate with Honors Program Distinction.



Students found guilty of conduct violations may not be eligible for Honors opportunities and awards, such as Oxford, Tim Smith, scholarships, fellowships, and travel awards/conferences, subject to the discretion of the Directors and Honors committee.

## **Requirements for Graduation with “Honors Program Distinction”**

To graduate with Honors Program Distinction from The University of Tampa, a UT Honors Program student must have a grade point average at The University of Tampa of at least 3.5 at the time of graduation, must have attended a minimum of four Honors Program symposia per academic year, and must have completed the required number of Honors Program courses or other Honors experiences for credit as indicated below.

### *Students Who Enter the Program as Freshmen:*

Pathways to Honors courses (two semesters of one credit each), and five additional Honors courses or special Honors experiences for credit (Honors Enrichment Tutorials, Honors Independent Studies, Honors Study Abroad credits, or Oxford) are required. It is recommended that during their freshman and sophomore years, students complete a minimum of two regular, semester-long Honors classes for at least three credits each and then fulfill the junior requirements.

### *Students Who Enter as Sophomores:*

Five Honors courses or special Honors experiences for credit (see above) are required. At least two of the Honors Program courses must be regular semester-long Honors courses completed for at least three credits each, in addition to the junior requirements.

### *Students Who Enter as Juniors:*

Students will be allowed to join the Honors Program as Juniors only if

they are transfer students from another university and will be enrolled at UT for at least two years. Special attention will be given to transfer students who were actively engaged in their previous university's Honors Program and can provide evidence of their participation. Continuing UT students are not allowed to join the Honors Program as Juniors. Transfer students who join the Honors Program as Juniors must complete five Honors courses or special Honors experiences. At least one of the Honors Program courses must be a regular semester-long Honors course completed for at least three credits. The other four courses can be any of the following:

- Regular Honors courses
- Honors Enrichment Tutorials
- Honors independent study courses
- Honors Education Abroad courses
- Honors Oxford Semester courses
- The Washington Center Internships/Seminars
- Honors Senior Thesis

Particularly for students with heavy majors or those planning on graduate school, the junior portion of Honors is designed to lead the student toward graduate level research, with students being introduced to such research through Honors Enrichment Tutorials, continuing through research-oriented independent study, and culminating in a senior research project. Many Honors undergraduates have made presentations at conferences or have been published as undergraduates. Students not intending to attend graduate school are enriched through closer contact with faculty, the ability to pursue questions one-on-one, and a greater understanding of professionalism in their field. In order to fulfill Honors Program requirements, all Honors courses must be taken for a grade, must be passed with at least a D, and cannot be taken pass/fail.

## **Pathways to Honors**

All entering Honors freshmen are required to take HON 101/HON 102: Pathways to Honors for a grade. Pathways to Honors is designed to acquaint students with the Honors Program, to encourage critical

thinking, and to experience scholarship and research first hand. The focus is on active learning, particularly through outside-the-classroom experiences, such as research and inquiry projects and the Honors Symposia series. HON 101 and HON 102 are taken for one credit hour each and do not count toward the five Honors course requirements for freshmen or sophomores. Failing either HON 101 or HON 102 will result in automatic dismissal from the Honors Program.

## **Honors Courses**

Each semester, the UT faculty create and offer twenty or more courses exclusively to Honors students. Enrollment in Honors courses is typically limited to seventeen students per classroom. These courses are rigorous and span the full spectrum of the many fields of study available at the University of Tampa. Many of these courses provide credit hours for UT's Baccalaureate Experience. Failing an Honors course will result in automatic dismissal from the Honors Program. Honors course offerings are available on-line at [www.ut.edu](http://www.ut.edu) and Workday.

## **Honors Thesis**

Students must complete an Honors thesis to complete their core curriculum and graduate with Honors. To do this, students should take a minimum of 6 thesis credits across 1 to 2 years working with an Honors committee.

The Honors committee is selected by the Honors student and consists of three full-time faculty members at the University of Tampa: an Honors Thesis Advisor, preferably from the department of the student's major; another faculty member in the student's major department; and a faculty member outside of the student's major department (the outside reader would preferably come from a different University of Tampa College, though this is not required). If a student chooses a thesis advisor from outside of their major, which is permissible, then the outside committee member must be chosen from outside of the student's declared major department.

These are the thesis proposal deadlines: if graduating in the spring, the proposal must be turned in by the first Monday of November in the fall semester before the semester in which the student graduates. If graduating in the fall, the proposal must be turned in the second Monday of April in the spring semester before the semester in which the student graduates.

Here are the steps (forms are available at [uthonors.com](http://uthonors.com) under “thesis”)

Step 1: Propose your project by filling out the Thesis Submittable Application

Step 2: Confirm your thesis committee by filling out the Thesis Committee Form

Step 3: Complete 6 to 10 Thesis Credits via your major or through Hon 490. To “register” for Honors 490, fill out the general UT Independent Study Form. The course title is “Hon 490.” The professor is your thesis director. The chair is one of the honors directors. Submit the form to the Registrar’s office. **Do not attempt to register for someone else’s Hon 490 in Workday** as you would other classes. (Workday will say you aren’t eligible because you’re essentially trying to sign up for someone else’s thesis class, and you don’t want to do that.)

Step 4: Defend your thesis. Students attempting to complete their thesis projects in the Fall must defend their projects by the second Monday of November; students attempting to complete their thesis projects in the Spring must defend their projects by the second Monday in April. When the thesis is defended, everyone on the committee signs the Thesis Completion Form.

Step 5: Grant the Library permission to save your thesis by filling out the Institutional Repository Form & ask your director to confirm thesis completion by uploading the Thesis Completion Form to Submittable.

Students who do not finish the thesis must complete 2 extra courses in the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences (any, not just in Honors) in order to satisfy their core requirements; however, while taking these extra 2 courses will signal that their core courses are complete, they will not graduate with honors.

## **Oxford Study Abroad Program**

Honors Program juniors or seniors earning a GPA of at least 3.5 are eligible to compete for the Oxford Study Abroad Program. The students selected to enroll for a term at Oxford University in England earn 14 credit hours and Honors course credits while studying under the unique Oxford tutorial system, in which Oxford faculty teach students one-on-one. Six UT Honors Program students per year are selected to participate. The deadline is October 14 for those wishing to attend Oxford in the subsequent spring term; the deadline is the Friday before Spring Break for those wishing to attend Oxford in the subsequent fall term. Students will be selected by the Faculty Honors Committee on the criteria listed below. The Honors Program subsidizes the Oxford semester so that payment of your tuition to UT covers the Oxford tuition. For more information on the financial arrangement of the Oxford Study Abroad Program contact the Honors Program Office.

The criteria used by the Faculty Committee on Honors for evaluating Oxford Study Abroad Program participants are as follows:

- Junior or senior in the Honors Program
- Record of prior involvement in the Honors Program
- Quality and clarity of the written essay
- Effective oral communication skills during the interview
- Professional demeanor of the applicant
- Demonstrated familiarity with the Oxford Study Abroad Program
- Uniqueness of the tutorials to be undertaken; the experience at Oxford should be one that can not be found at UT
- Perceived aptitude for intense tutorial learning
- Perceived commitment to scholarly development
- Cumulative GPA is not a deciding factor in the selection process as all applicants must have a 3.5 or higher

Students who joined Honors before Fall 2021 who attend Oxford will receive credit for 3 of their required 5 Honors courses to graduate.

Students who joined Honors in Fall 2021 or after may receive credit for 3 classes of their choosing, whether those are Honors classes (such as Idea

Labs or Dialectics), classes in their major, or Thesis credits, the credit for which is subject to conversation with the Honors Program Director and the student's academic advisor and or/chair of their home department.

## **Timothy M. Smith Inspiration Through Exploration Award**

The Timothy M. Smith Inspiration Through Exploration Award will be presented annually to one Honors Program student. The selected student will receive \$2,500 to be used for a summer travel opportunity. The annual award has been established to honor the life of Timothy M. Smith. Although a lawyer by trade, Tim's true passion was traveling the world and writing about his many experiences. The award is funded by the family of Timothy M. Smith.

Any University of Tampa undergraduate Honors Program student in good standing is eligible to apply for the award. The application deadline is February 1 prior to summer travel. To be considered, candidates must submit an original nonfiction essay, a short essay on why the candidate believes they will benefit from the award, and a summary of how and where the candidate would travel if selected. Travel must be completed prior to completing coursework required for graduation. Each year's recipient must submit an essay detailing their experiences during their summer journey and will be expected to present an Honors Symposium on their experience. For more information on the Timothy M. Smith Inspiration Through Exploration Award, visit [www.inspirationthroughexploration.com](http://www.inspirationthroughexploration.com).

## **Honors Study Abroad Scholarships**

Honors Program students are strongly encouraged to study abroad to enhance their academic experience. To facilitate such opportunities, the Honors Program offers Honors Study Abroad Scholarships, which are financial awards given to deserving Honors students whose field of study will directly and significantly benefit from an Honors Study Abroad experience. The amount of the award will vary based on the need of the student and the number of applications received. The award can be

applied toward any faculty-led study abroad opportunity. Applications are due at least two months before the onset of the study abroad experience.

## **Honors Undergraduate Research Fellowships**

The Honors Program sponsors up to ten Honors Undergraduate Research Fellows annually. Each student is awarded a fellowship of up to \$1,000. These Research Fellows work under the mentorship of a faculty member, assisting with research and producing a research paper or project for presentation to the University community in April (and often to scholarly conferences as well). Students should contact full-time faculty members with whom they would like to do a research fellowship. Applications are due by the second Friday in March.

## **National, Regional, and State Honors Council Conferences**

Honors students in good standing are eligible to attend conferences at the state, regional, and national level. These conferences are sponsored by associations of Honors colleges known as Honors Councils. All conference-related expenses are paid by the Honors Program Office. Students must apply to attend, though just a few students will be selected to attend each year. Application involves submitting an abstract to present scholarship and research at the conference, either as a podium, poster, or panel presentation. Deadlines, dates, and details can be found on the Honors Program website.

## **Honors Student Conference Travel**

In lieu of taking numerous students to national, regional, or state honors council conferences, students are encouraged to present their research at a conference with their faculty advisor. The Honors Program will help cover the travel costs for Honors students to present at conferences with their faculty advisors.

## **Honors Symposia Series**

The Honors Program seeks to stimulate intellectual thought and

discussion on campus and in the Tampa Bay community by sponsoring a variety of symposia every fall and spring semester. This interdisciplinary program covers a wide range of topics with its aim to highlight contemporary, debatable issues; social justice and civic reform; and original research and innovation. The symposia presenters include university faculty, guest experts and professionals, and students at both our university and within the greater academic community, both nationally and internationally.

All symposia are free and open to the public. A detailed listing of the time, place, topics, and presenters in the Honors Symposia series is available on the Honors website.

Students will receive credit for attending symposia only if they arrive within 15 minutes of the beginning of the symposia and stay until there are no more than 5 minutes of the symposium remaining. Students who arrive more than 15 minutes after the beginning of the symposium or leave early will not receive credit for attending the symposium.

## **Honors Housing**

Dorms (Mackay Hall) and floors in dorms are set-aside specifically for Honors students in order to create a residence life experience that is conducive to study and learning. The area coordinators of these floors provide residence life experiences that are geared to Honors students' needs. Contact the Director of Residence Life to request placement on one of the Honors floors.

## **Honors Websites**

The UT Honors Program has three primary websites. For general information about the Honors Program at UT, see here:

<https://www.ut.edu/honors/>

For information on recent events and important links for Honors Students, see the Honors blog here: <https://uthonors.com/>

Additional information about the Honors Program is available on



Blackboard. To find this information, go to <http://ut.blackboard.com> and select Honors Program.

## **Honors Staff, Contact Information and Room Locations**

### *Office of the Co-Director:*

Dr. Ryan T. Cragun: Plant Hall Room 309; phone 813-257-3803.

E-mail address: [rcragun@ut.edu](mailto:rcragun@ut.edu).

### *Office of the Co-Director:*

Dr. Kacy D. Tillman: Plant Hall Room 242; phone 813-257-1706.

E-mail address: [ktillman@ut.edu](mailto:ktillman@ut.edu).

### *Office of the Staff Assistant:*

Carla Sykes: Plant Hall Room 307, phone 813-257-3545.

Email address: [csykes@ut.edu](mailto:csykes@ut.edu) or [honors@ut.edu](mailto:honors@ut.edu).

### *Honors Lounge: Plant Hall 310*

The Honors Lounge has three computers, a printer, desks and tables, coffee maker, a microwave oven, and a refrigerator. It is a great place to relax between classes or after classes and meet friends and colleagues in the Honors Program. There is a coded entry for access to the study/lounge. The code may be obtained in the Honors Program office, Plant Hall 307.

### *Honors Conference Room: Plant Hall 305*

This room can be reserved and utilized for Honors Program students. Please see the staff assistant to reserve this room.

## **The Honors Council**

The Honors Council represents all Honors Program students, helps the Director develop new aspects of the Program, assess Program strengths

and areas for improvement, and initiates and oversees extracurricular activities for the Program. The Honors Council elects its own President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Student Government Representative annually in March. These individuals compose the Executive Board.

## **Revisions to the Handbook**

Changes may be made to this handbook throughout the academic year. However, Honors Program policies and graduation requirements that are detailed in the Honors Handbook when a student joins the Honors Program will be the policies and requirements that apply to the student. The latest copy of the handbook can be found on the Honors Program website.

For more information, visit the UT Honors Program website:

<https://www.ut.edu/honors/>



For all Honors Applications, go here:

<https://goo.gl/FrmrHe>