



Honors Program Student Handbook



2020-2021

Photo from Fall 2019 Honors Retreat at the Ozark Underground Lab in Protem, MO, about to venture into a cave.

Table of Contents

History of Honors Program	1
Honors Director and Honors Committee	2
Becoming an Honors Student.....	3
Ways to Earn Honors Status	4
Honors Courses	5
Honors Course Rotation	6
Timeframes	7
General Advising	8
Supplemental Honors Advising.....	9
Remaining in Honors	10
Golden Griffon Scholarship Requirements.....	11
Appeals.....	12
Travel Funding.....	13
Clubs and Organizations	14
Honors Program Pledge of Conduct	15
Other Important Information.....	16
Different Expectations from High School to College	17

History of the Honors Program

In 1987, Missouri Western State College established the Honors Program with administrative support, budget, utilization of the most qualified faculty, and development of an interesting, innovative, challenging and flexible curriculum with smaller class sizes. Dr. Gerald Zweerink became the first Honors Director, establishing the Insignis Scholarship (now the Golden Griffon Scholarship), Student Honors Organization, and affiliation with Alpha Chi.

Since then, three honors directors (Dr. David Bennett [1993-2005], Dr. Elizabeth Latosi-Sawin [2005-2012] and Dr. Teddi Deka [2012 to current]), along with the Honors Committee and support staff, developed curriculum, increased the number of students involved in honors, and provided opportunities for research and travel.

Mission: The Honors Program at Missouri Western State University provides an enriched educational experience for the exceptional student. The program is designed for the student who enjoys learning, and whose personal goals emphasize the pursuit of understanding and knowledge. Ultimately, the program provides students with academic training and skills which will serve them well in both their chosen careers and their personal lives. Goals of the program are to foster the growth of intellectual inquiry, independence, and initiative in honors participants with an array of learning experiences including special courses, colloquia, and independent research and study. Each honors experience is simultaneously challenging, exciting, and enjoyable.

Honors Director



Dr. Teddi Deka

*We personally support honors students
in every academic discipline from
curriculum development to advising...*

Honors Committee

Dr. Jordan Atkinson	Communication
Dr. Stacia Bensyl	Communication
Dr. Angela Haas	History
Dr. Heather Kendall	Nursing
Mr. James Mulder	Library
Dr. Jones Mutua	Computer Science, Math, Physics
Dr. Bin Qiu	Craig School of Business
Dr. Tilo Roy	Biology
Dr. William Russell	Health, Physical Education, Recreation

Becoming an Honors Student

Incoming Freshmen



Incoming freshmen qualify for the Honors Program by earning a 26 or higher ACT and a 3.5 or higher GPA in high school. Incoming students apply for the Honors Program and are selected for admission from their applications.

Current and Transfer Students



Current students at MWSU, or transfer students can apply after 15 hours of college credit with an overall GPA of 3.5 or higher. If these students have more than 32 hours of college credit, they can only pursue Majors Honors (please refer to Types of Honors). Applications are available at www.missouriwestern.edu/honors

Ways to Earn Honors Status

MWSU offers two honors recognitions: General Studies Honors and Majors Honors. General Studies Honors encourages breadth of understanding, while Majors Honors encourages depth of understanding within the major.

"I know I would not be where I am today without the support of honors faculty as MWSU. I unknowingly was more than prepared for my graduate program." – Makenna Snyder

General Studies Honors

Complete 24 hours of General Studies Honors courses or Honors Colloquia with a minimum of 6 credit hours of Honors Colloquia, earn an A or B in all honors-designated courses applied to General Studies Honors, and maintain a good standing (overall GPA of 3.25 or higher GPA). All coursework must be accomplished at MWSU. The award appears on the transcript, and the student receives a graduation medal during a special recognition ceremony.

Majors Honors

Complete a major research project or creative work under the guidance of a professor within the major, completing 6 credits of 300+ honors coursework within the major, 6 credits of 300+ Honors Colloquia (4 credits if already completed General Studies Honors for total of 10), earning an A or B in all coursework, maintaining a 3.5 or higher GPA, completion of written thesis with presentation at a regional/national venue or submitted for publication. The award appears on the transcript, and the student receives a graduation medal during a special recognition ceremony. A contract between the offering department, honors program and student is required to initiate a Majors Honors project.

Honors Courses

General Studies Honors Courses

The Honors Program and other departments determine the General Studies rotation for the academic year. This rotation appears in the University Catalog and it is included on the following page. The rotation generally does not alter from year to year. However, sometimes changes occur due to student usage and faculty availability. Honors courses are designated by -80 through -89 unless designated as “always honors” (*) (see chart on next page).

Honors by Contract

Occasionally, students need to take one of the general studies courses that is normally offered as honors, when the course is not offered in the rotation or because of schedule constraints. Students can find the class offered at a time that works in his or her schedule, and fill out an Honors by Contract Form (available under ‘forms’ on the honors program website), which specifies additional coursework to be completed to achieve honors status. An HBC form must be completed and accepted the semester before the start date of the course. A professor, department chair, or the Honors Director, has the right to refuse an HBC. Please consult with the Honors Director if wanting an HBC. HBCs can only be granted for general studies courses that are typically offered with honors sections, and with the approval noted above. There are no HBCs for colloquia (HON195, HON395). HBCs are not available for incoming Freshmen.

Colloquia

The Honors Program asks faculty to propose colloquia centered on special topics or themes. All colloquia encourage creative and critical thinking, enrichment within the topic, and camaraderie among honors students. In Fall semester, the Honors Program offers both HON195 (incoming Freshmen only) and HON395 colloquia. In Spring semester, only HON395 colloquia are offered. Three to five colloquia are offered each semester. Two-credit colloquia are typically seminar-style themed courses specifically for honors students. Three-credit colloquia are typically cross-listed with another advanced majors course and are formatted to the demands of the major requirements.

Honors Course Rotation

Fall Semester Even Years BIO101 BIO105 CHE111 COM104 ENG112* HIS200 or 210 HUM203 or 204 or 205 MAT165* MAT167* MUS101 PED101 PHY104 PHY210* PSY101 REL250 or 251 or 252	Fall Semester Odd Years BIO101 BIO105 CHE101 CHE111 COM104 ENG112* GEO100 HIS140 HUM203 or 204 or 205 MAT165* MAT167* MUS101 PED101 PHY104 PHY210* PSY101 REL 250 or 251 or 252
Spring Semester Even Years CHE111 COM104 ECO101 ENG112* GEO 160 HIS210 or 230 MAT167* PED101 PHL230 PHY107 PSC101	Spring Semester Odd Years ART100 CHE101 CHE111 COM104 ENG112 HIS150 MAT167* PED101 PHL230 PHY107 PSC101 SOC110 or 120

* Always Honors

Timeframes

For General Studies Honors, the Honors Office recommends taking two general studies honors classes and one colloquium every semester until completed. If following this recommendation, General Studies Honors would be completed in three semesters. Keep in mind that you must receive an A or B in each of these classes in order for it to count as honors credit. AT MINIMUM, the Honors Office recommends taking at least one class pertaining to General Studies Honors every semester until completed.

HON195 GSH Course GSH Course	HON395 GSH Course GSH Course	HON395 GSH Course GSH Course	Complete!
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For Majors Honors, the Honors Office recommends choosing two semesters, either the fall and spring of senior year, or the spring of junior year and the fall of senior year, to complete the requirements and project. Please review the requirements for Majors Honors in the previous section. A word to the wise: Plan your project in advance! Students wishing to pursue Majors Honors must have the support of a faculty sponsor to provide guidance for the project. You may find it beneficial to work with a faculty member on your research a semester or two before asking for sponsorship.

HON395 Major Course Begin Thesis	HON395 Major Course Complete Thesis Present or submit for publication	Complete!
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General Advising

Every student has an academic advisor at MWSU. You can find your advisor from your Goldlink account. Most students meet their advisor for the first time during the middle of their first semester, right before pre-registration begins for the Spring semester. Of course, you can meet your advisor beforehand, and perhaps that is a good idea, just to say hello and introduce yourself.

Pre-Advisement: Advisement period begins 3 weeks before the registration period for the following semester. All advisors will begin posting charts on their doors for advisee meetings or notifying you by e-mail to make an appointment. Make sure to sign up for advisement as soon as possible, because you will be able to register with the seniors and need to obtain advisement and your PIN number to register.

1. Make sure your advisor knows you are an honors student.
2. Check the list of available General Studies honors courses and Colloquia you will have received, by e-mail, from the Honors Office.
3. Try to register for two General Studies honors courses and one Colloquium until you meet the requirements to fulfill General Studies Honors (6 GS honors courses + 6 credits of colloquia). At minimum, try for at least one GS honors course or at least one colloquium class per semester until you achieve General Studies Honors.
4. Make sure you and your advisor keep track of your progress in honors by examining the General Studies Honors block on Griffon GPS. You can also use a General Studies Honors Progress Report to help keep track, which is available on the honors homepage (www.missouriwestern.edu/honors).

Supplemental Honors Advising

If you have any questions or concerns about your Honors requirements, contact the Honors Office at 271-4535.

If you would like supplemental advisement, contact the Honors Office or go to <https://deka.youcanbook.me> and you can make a supplemental advisement appointment with the Honors Director. Please note that you will still need to visit your assigned advisor.

You can also ask for honors advice pertaining to your major by visiting one of these contacts:

Departmental Contacts					
BIO	Roy	4382	EGT	Zhu	5822
BUS	Jones	4476	HON	Deka	4535
CHE	Hiley	4437	HP	Russell	4492
CJLSSW	Tushaus	5621	NUR	Kendall	4331
COM	Atkinson	5660	PSY	Deka	4445
CSB	Qiu	4338	SFA	May	4282
CSMP	Mutua	4288	SSH	Haas	5699
EDU	Johnson	5950			

Remaining in Honors

GPA and Grades

To continue participation in the Honors Program, students must achieve a 3.25 or higher overall GPA to remain in good standing with the Honors Program.

The Honors Program checks GPA every semester. Students with GPAs below 3.25 will receive:

1. First semester: Notification by e-mail to raise GPA by the next semester.
2. Second semester: If GPA is higher than 3.0, an extension offer by e-mail that must be accepted by the student to maintain honors status. If GPA is lower than 3.0, or extension is not accepted, loss of honors designation.
3. Third semester: If GPA is higher than 3.0, request to meet with the Honors Director to discuss whether it is possible to meet the benchmark before achieving General Studies Honors and to create an agreed-upon plan of action. If student fails to meet with the director at this time, the result will be loss of honors designation. **STUDENTS MUST ACHIEVE THE GPA BENCHMARK TO EARN GENERAL STUDIES HONORS.**

Progress toward General Studies Honors

Honors students must demonstrate progress toward General Studies Honors. Students should take at least one General Studies Honors class or Colloquium per semester until completing the program. Lapses of two semesters will be considered inadequate progress, and the student will need to meet with the director to establish a plan of action. Failure to meet with the director after a lapse of two semesters will result in loss of honors designation.

Golden Griffon Competitive Scholarship Requirements

If you have the Golden Griffon Scholarship, you must:

Work steadily toward completion of General Studies Honors. Steady progress includes taking at least one General Studies Honors course or Colloquium course per semester until General Studies Honors is completed. If the student lapses one semester, he or she will be notified by the Honors Program. Lapses of two semesters will be considered inadequate progress.

Maintain an overall GPA of 3.5 or higher every year.

Complete Griffon Edge within the first semester at MWSU.

Live in one of the Residence Halls on campus for the entire duration of receiving the housing portion of the scholarship. This must be the student's only residence excluding holidays and summer break

Join and participate in an MWSU club or organization during the first and second year at MWSU, beginning at least by the 2nd semester. The activities may be social, cultural, athletic, intellectual or civic in nature. The Honors Program will send a survey, by e-mail, each Spring semester to verify your participation. Golden Griffons must complete this survey. Failure to do so will result in loss of scholarship.

The Financial Aid office keeps track of GPA and residence requirements. GPAs are checked every semester to determine continuation of the scholarship. To retain the Golden Griffon, your Fall cumulative GPA must be at least 2.5 or higher. Your Spring cumulative GPA (institution plus or minus dual-credit*) must be 3.5 or higher. *If you are subtracting dual credit to meet the 3.5 or higher criterion, and dual credit was completed through MWSU, contact the Financial Aid office. Our system will automatically count this credit as 'institution' unless overridden by the Financial Aid office staff.

The Honors Program tracks progress and participation requirements. Please consult the Honors Program with any questions regarding your scholarship.

Appeals

Loss of Golden Griffon Scholarship: Appeal for the loss of the Golden Griffon Scholarship due to GPA or residence requirements must occur through the Financial Aid Scholarship Committee. If lost due to GPA, the scholarship may be reinstated after reaching a cumulative GPA of 3.5. Consult with the Financial Aid office for details about reinstatement. Loss of Scholarship due to any other reason must be made through the Honors Program (see below).

Remain in the Honors Program: Appeal to remain in the Honors Program due to low GPA or lack of progress should be made directly to Honors Director, in writing. The appeal will be discussed in the next monthly Honors Committee Meeting and voted upon by its members.

Requirements and Awarding of General Studies Honors or Majors Honors: Appeal for awarding General Studies or Majors Honors should be made directly to Honors Director, in writing. The appeal will be discussed in the next monthly Honors Committee Meeting and voted upon by its members. After receiving the committee's decision, the student can further appeal to Admissions and Graduation Committee.

Grades in Colloquia (HON195, HON395) Classes: The Honors Program follows the requirements outlined in the Student Handbook of Rights and Responsibilities. For specific information on the appeals process, contact the Honors Director at 271-4535.

Grades in General Studies Honors Classes: Appeals regarding classes other than HON classes must go through the offering department. All departments have appeal procedures available by contacting the department's chair.

Travel Funding

The Honors Program encourages students to present their research or projects at regional and national conferences. There are several funding sources available for students. Consult the Honors Program for more information if you plan to present your research or project.

Applied Learning (Formerly the Student Excellence Fund)

If you have an applied learning opportunity in need of funding, please contact the office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to discuss the availability of funds that the MWSU Foundation has allocated to the University for applied learning opportunities.

Blake K. Scanlon Grant

Up to \$1000 to present at a refereed national or international venue

<https://www.missouriwestern.edu/foundation/>

Deadlines: Third Friday in October, first Friday in February

Honors Program Travel Award

Up to \$200 to present or attend an honors-related conference (NCHC, Great Plains)

Applications available in the honors Program office, Spratt 202

Deadline: One month in advance of the conference

Student Government Association Individual Funding

No specific cap to funding.

<https://www.missouriwestern.edu/sga/>

Deadline: Must apply far enough in advance so that SGA can meet to vote on application

Student Government Association RSO Funding

Recognized Student Organizations only – no cap

<https://www.missouriwestern.edu/sga/>

Deadline: One month in advance of conference or event

Honors Program General Funding

For faculty members to accompany students in group honors travel, or provide additional funding on a case-by-case basis.

Meet with honors program director

Deadline: One month prior to travel date.

Clubs and Organizations



Student Honors Organization is a social club open to all honors students. SHO provides friendship, leadership opportunities and community involvement along with exciting activities! In the past, SHO has sponsored movie nights, museum tours, and even a trip to the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Nebraska.

Students may join by contacting Dr. Deka (deka@missouriwestern.edu) or president Shelby Wisner (swisner@missouriwestern.edu).



Alpha Chi Honor Society is a national college honor society, inviting juniors, seniors and graduate students in the top 10% of their class to join. Alpha Chi Honor Society involves its members in all aspects of its operations, including local events, scholarly programs, and regional/national conventions.

Contact Dr. Deka (deka@missouriwestern.edu) or president Breanna Hancock (bhancock1@missouriwestern.edu) if you would like more information.

Honors Program Pledge of Conduct

As a member of the MWSU Honors Program, I acknowledge that my membership is a privilege that I have worked hard to attain. I will behave with honesty and integrity toward faculty, staff, administrators and fellow students. This expectation extends to my behavior both on and off campus.

I will read and abide by MWSU's Student Code of Conduct, found on the Student Affairs website. The MWSU Student Code of Conduct discusses repercussions to violating the Student Code of Conduct. If I am found liable for a violation, I may no longer retain my honors status pending review by the Honors Committee.

I will be a role model to other students, an active and congenial member of the MWSU community, and an outstanding representative of the MWSU community.

Additionally, I acknowledge that acting in ways unbecoming to an honors student may lead to review of my membership in the Honors Program by the Honors Committee and potential dismissal from the program.

Other Important Information

Check your e-mail at least once per week

All Honors Program communications come through e-mail.

Beware of honors societies that contact you online

Make sure that the honors society is a recognized student organization at MWSU. A listing is available at <https://www.missouriwestern.edu/student-life/csi/>

Follow us on Instagram

@mwsuhonors

Visit us in the Honors Lounge

The Honors Lounge is in Spratt 202. We have a microwave, refrigerator, drinks available to purchase (honor system), two computers and a printer. The lounge is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Students can eat their lunch, study, or just hang out.

Different Expectations from High School to College

Before you begin your freshman year in college, prepare yourself to be challenged by harder work, more work, and work that must be completed in a shorter period of time. You should begin to change your educational work ethic because you will be doing most of your work outside of the classroom, and you will be expected to learn the majority of your assigned material on your own, rather than relying on your teachers to teach it to you. You should also begin preparing yourself to learn in a less-structured classroom atmosphere in which your teachers will no longer remind you about what you are supposed to do, will hold you responsible for completing your assignments in the correct and timely manner described in the course syllabus they give you on the first day of class, and will be less likely to bend the rules or allow you to earn extra credit if your work is late or if you perform poorly. You may also discover that college professors are less available than high school teachers and that some prefer to maintain a somewhat more formal relationship with their students than high school teachers.

Time management is a tremendous problem for many freshmen. For most high school students — especially bright ones — the educational day ends when the school day ends because they were able to learn all they need to know while they were in school. Learning does not end when the class day ends in college. In fact, learning often begins when classes end because so much learning takes place outside the classroom. This abrupt change of events is particularly difficult for students who are accustomed to going to high school for seven hours and then having the remaining 17 hours of the day to eat, sleep, relax, shop, play video games, watch television, listen to music and hang out with friends. One of the purposes of higher education is to prepare you to become a person who is capable of mastering large amounts of difficult material in a short period of time and performing this work in a responsible and independent manner without having to be reminded to do it. In other words, one of the objectives of a college education is to transform adolescents into adults. The following comment from one of my former learning community students puts this objective into sharp perspective. “It’s time for me to step out of the purgatory between my teenage years and adulthood and take some responsibility for my life.”

Excerpt from Appleby, D.C. (2014, August). How do college freshmen view the academic differences between high school and college? Psychology Teacher Network. Retrieved from

<http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/ptn/2014/08/college-freshmen.aspx>

Benefits of the Honors Program

- * Early registration (senior status)
- * Use of Honors Lounge
- * Attentive Honors Staff
- * Dedicated Honors Committee
- * Honors sections of General Studies classes
- * Exclusive Colloquium seminars
- * Retreats and conferences
- * Honors achievements on transcript
- * Graduation medals when earning General Studies or Majors Honors
- * Opportunity to engage in Honors Independent Research
- * Student Honors Organization (SHO) membership
- * Honors housing on Academic Achievement Floor
- * Opportunity to travel / present at honors conferences

Contact Us

Phone: 816-271-4535

Email: honors@missouriwestern.edu

Web: www.missouriwestern.edu/honors



Missouri Western State University

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