University Honors Program

Student Handbook

Fall 2015
Mission Statement:

The mission of the Texas A&M University-Texarkana Honors Program is to provide a community of exemplary scholars an enhanced and supportive learning environment responsible to the educational needs of both traditional and nontraditional students who are moved to pursue their education beyond typical course requirements. Honors students will have the opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary activities including Honors colloquia and seminars, increased opportunities for undergraduate research/creative activity, leadership opportunities, and participate in the Honors Society and extracurricular activities.

Definition of Honors education:

Honors education is characterized by in-class and extracurricular activities that are measurably broader, deeper, or more complex than comparable learning experiences typically found at institutions of higher education. Honors experiences include a distinctive learner-directed environment and philosophy, provide opportunities that are appropriately tailored to fit the institution's culture and mission, and frequently occur within a close community of students and faculty (National Collegiate Honors Council, http://nchchonors.org/faculty-directors/definition-of-honors-education/)

Admission Process:

**Freshmen Students:**
- Member of Presidential Leadership Class
  - Or
- Qualify for Automatic Full Admission and
- Letter of interest and commitment
- Application to program

**Transfer Students:**
- Cumulative grade point average of 3.50 or above
- Letter of interest and commitment
- Application to program

**Honors Scholarships:**

Students receiving the Presidential or Valedictorian/Salutatorian scholarships are automatically members of the Honors program. There are a limited number of Honors scholarships available for transfer students, which are awarded by the Honors Program. All scholarship recipients must remain members in good standing of the Honors program to maintain the scholarship(s).
**How the Honors Program works:**

The University Honors Program is designed to work with every major at A&M-Texarkana. In addition to the curricular expectations outlined below, Honors students must participate in at least one Honors colloquium, activity or event each semester.

**Lower Division Requirements:**

Freshmen students are required to take the Honors section of IS 1100 in their first semester.

Students will also take either PHIL 1301 or PHIL 1350; these courses should count towards the core requirements and will ideally be done during the student’s first year. Students will also complete one Honors add-on project in a course of their choice, with the advisement of the Honors Director.

**Upper-division Requirements:**

Students take HONR 345 in the fall of their junior (or initial fall semester for transfer students).

In addition to the required courses, students must complete an additional three add-on projects, usually in courses required for the student’s major and are counted in the student’s degree requirements. The student works directly with the instructor of the course in designing a specific Honors project completed within this course. The successful completion of an Honors project within the course converts that course to Honors credit (for the purposes of fulfilling the program requirements).

With the exception of required courses- IS 1100, Phil 1301/PHIL 1350, and HONR 345- honors credit is non-academic credit and is not reflected on the student’s official transcript.

**Honors Curriculum:**

*Required coursework and projects*

**Freshmen students** (four year students) complete a total of 18 semester hours toward Honors credit.

- Year 1 and 2
  - Phil 1301 Introduction to Philosophy- or- PHIL 1350 Philosophy and Ethics in Science and Technology
  - 1 Honors project completed through approved lower-level add-on course contracts

- Year 3 and 4
  - HONR 345 Advanced Academic Argument (only offered in Fall semesters)
  - 3 Honors projects completed through approved upper-level add-on course contracts

**Transfer students** with two years or less remaining complete a total of 12 semester hours toward Honors credit.

- HONR 345 (only offered in Fall semesters)
- 3 Honors projects completed through approved upper-level ad hoc course contracts
While Honors courses and ad hoc course projects are not necessarily harder, they do provide students an opportunity for undergraduate research and creative activity in their major area. All Honors courses and projects must be completed with a grade of C or higher.

**Honors Projects/Add-On Credit**

To complete the project requirement for the Honors Program, students work with university professors to contract a non-honors course for honors project credit. This allows a high degree of flexibility in the program as students are able to tailor the requirements of the program toward their interests. The specific design of an honors contract project is created by the student and the instructor. The student, instructor, and Director of the Honors Program must agree to the honors contract contents before the option is approved to meet the student’s honors requirements.

Students must submit a completed Add-on Honors Request form to the Honors Program office to receive project credit for the course project.

**Colloquia**

The Honors Program provides several opportunities throughout the semester to attend colloquiums and presentations designed to provide an engaging and enriched university experience. Presenters include university faculty, guest experts and professionals, and Honors Program students from across the disciplines. These presentations are open to all university students, staff and faculty, and the general public.

Honors Program students must attend at least one Honors colloquium, activity or event each semester.

**Community Engagement**

Service to the community is an important aspect of being a member of the Honors Program. Honors students are encouraged to be active participants in the university and broader community. The Honors program will facilitate community engagement opportunities.

**Honors Program Advisory Group**

The Honors Program Advisory Group serves to advise the Honors Program Director on issues pertaining to the development, maintenance, and enhancement of the Honors Program. Members of the Advisory Group will meet regularly with the Honors Program Director to plan events, recommend changes to the Honors Program, and assist with program events and tasks.

All Honors Program students are eligible for membership in the group, and terms of service run for one academic year; there are no limits to number of terms a student may serve. At the first meeting of the Honors Program Student Union each academic year, the Honors Director will call for nominations of students willing to serve (one may nominate him/herself). The Honors Program Student Union will then vote to affirm or reject each nomination.
**Maintaining Active Status in Honors Program**

Students maintain active status in the Honors Program by completing required coursework (Phil 1301 or Phil 1350 and HONR 345), additional contracted/Add-on projects, attending Honors colloquia and events, and by maintaining the required grade point average of 3.5.

**Honors Program Probationary Status**

At the end of each semester (Fall and Spring/Summer), each Honors student’s status in the Honors program will be evaluated. Students whose GPA has fallen below the threshold of 3.5, has failed to participate in an adequate number of Honors events, or has failed to complete an Honors course or Honors add-on project will be placed on probation. Probationary status lasts for one semester, during which time the Honors student will work with the Honors Director to regain full status in the program. If you receive a scholarship through the Honors program, that scholarship will be reinstated after successful completion of the probationary period.

**Termination of Honors Program Membership**

Membership in the Honors Program is rarely terminated and then only with good reason, including:

- A student is accepted for membership and fails to take any Honors classes or participates in any Honors events. After one academic year of enrollment without taking any Honors classes, participation in Honors events, or advising by the Honors director or staff, the student’s membership is subject to termination.
- A student is found guilty of, or pleads guilty to, violations of the Student Code of Conduct and Discipline or state or federal law. For example, a student may be terminated for a violation such as academic dishonesty or a legal felony, such as an assault, to which he has pled guilty or has been convicted.
- A student requests in writing to have his or her name removed from Honors College membership.

**Organization Memberships**

The A&M-Texarkana Honors Program is a member of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), the professional association of undergraduate honors programs and colleges; and the Great Plains Honors Council, the regional association of NCHC.

Membership in the University Honors Program is separate from membership in national Honor Societies such as, Alpha Chi, the national honor society for Honors Program students.

**Expectations of Honor Students**

- Texas A&M University-Texarkana Student Code of Conduct can be found at [http://tamut.edu/Student-Life/Student%20Conduct/Code.html](http://tamut.edu/Student-Life/Student%20Conduct/Code.html)
- Maintain 3.50 cumulative grade point average
- Complete required coursework and add-on projects successfully
- Attend at least one colloquium each semester
**Honors Advising**

Honor students are required to meet with an Honors Program advisor each semester, in addition to meeting with their university or major advisor.

Students may contact:

- Dr. Craig Nakashian at 903-223-3136 or craig.nakashian@tamut.edu
- Bonnie Johnson at 903-334-6632 or bonnie.johnson@tamut.edu
- University Honors Program email honors@tamut.edu

**Honors Opportunities and Perks**

- Working one-on-one with A&M-Texarkana faculty in and out of the classroom
- Increased opportunities for undergraduate research/creative activity
- Participation in interdisciplinary activities such as the Honors Colloquium Series and seminars
- Community service opportunities
- Leadership opportunities in the Honors Program Advisory Group
- Honors Student Showcase, provides an opportunity for students to present original research or projects completed during the semester
- Private luncheons with faculty and administration at A&M-Texarkana
- Increased printing allocation of 200 black & white pages as well as exclusive study hours/library access
- Tutor and/or Academic Coach certification through the Student Success Center Honors Program
- Increased and enhanced borrowing privileges in the University Library

**Completion Information**

- Students must complete all Honors Program course and event requirements, maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.50, be in good standing with the Honors Program, and meet all other degree requirements.
- On graduation, students who complete the University Honors Program will receive the gold Honors seal on their diploma and special designation as an Honors Program graduate on transcripts.
- Honors Program graduates will receive an Honors medallion that may be worn at graduation.

**Note on Latin Honors**

Graduation with Latin Honors (cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude) is based entirely on Grade Point Average and is open to all A&M-Texarkana students with 45 semester hours completed in resident. Latin Honors are separate from successful completion of the University Honors Program.