



Owens Community College

Honors Program

Student Handbook

2020

The Owens Community College Honors Program

Critical Thinking
Effective Communication
Ethical Reasoning
Civic Engagement
Diversity and Leadership

The Honors Program Mission

The mission of the Owens Community College Honors Program is to provide beyond the standard curriculum, a challenging educational opportunity for exceptional students who strive for academic excellence.

The Honors Program Vision

The Owens Honors Program brings together outstanding students and faculty in dynamic environments that inspire unparalleled intellectual pursuits, while challenging students to initiate, create, and think critically to enhance personal inquiry and growth.

The Honors Program Learning Outcomes

Honors Scholars fulfill the program learning outcomes by completing the Honors Program curriculum.

Critical Thinking

Honors Scholars will:

- Analyze texts.
- Identify and evaluate the argument in “texts.”
- Articulate the disciplinary, historical, or cultural assumptions behind arguments.
- Apply knowledge creatively to solve problems and explain issues.

Effective Communication

Honors Scholars will:

- Communicate ideas, facts, theories, and arguments effectively.
- Express ideas and concepts precisely and persuasively in multiple formats.
- Present ideas through oral, written, and appropriate technologies to a variety of audiences.

Ethical Reasoning

Honors Scholars will:

- Reflect on personal values and their influence on choices.

Civic Engagement & Leadership

Honors Scholars will:

- Contribute to the development and vitality of the community of scholars established by the Honors Program.
- Demonstrate the ability to lead teams and be effective team members.
- Enhance classroom learning with related experiences in which they apply their knowledge and skills in a way that serves others in the community.

Diversity

Honors Scholars will:

- Demonstrate a respect for human diversity and a critical awareness of their own assumptions, stereotypes, and biases when confronting difference.
- Identify and assess the personal, social, scientific, and/or historical influences that contribute to their perspectives on the above issues.

Interested Honors Scholars

Who are Honors Scholars?

Students participating in the Honors Program are designated as **Honors Scholars**.

Honors Scholars are highly motivated students who wish to go beyond the minimum requirements for graduation. They are enthusiastic learners who are engaged both academically and civically.

Honors Scholars demonstrate the following characteristics.

- excellence in a given academic area, as demonstrated by grades
- intellectual curiosity—the desire to learn more than the minimum
- open-mindedness
- engagement and in-class participation
- willingness and ability to work independently
- initiative and responsibility
- dependability, attentiveness, and punctuality

The benefits of being an Honors Scholar are listed below.

- Small, interactive core Honors Program Courses and meaningful student/faculty interaction in courses designated as Honors Option Courses.
- Individualized advisement from an Honors Mentor focused on student success.
- Eligibility for Honors-specific scholarship through the Owens Foundation.
- Enriching out-of-classroom activities.
- Eligibility for membership in a national honor societies.
- Participation in the annual Honors Symposium held each spring.
- Honors designation on diploma and transcript.
- Recognition as Honors Program Graduate at Commencement.
- Owens Honors Program Medallion.
- Enhanced preparation for entering baccalaureate and advanced programs.
- Eligibility for scholarships at four-year institutions.
- Resume enhancement.
- Priority registration.
- Letters of recommendation from the Honors Program.

Who is Eligible to Become an Honors Scholar?

To qualify for admission to the Owens Community College Honors Program, students must meet *at least one* of the following criteria:

- have a 3.5 high school GPA,¹
- be current CCP student with a 3.5 GPA, or
- have a minimum of 3.5 college GPA after 6 earned credits.

To become an Honors Scholar, a student must complete the online application, located at [OCC Honors Application](#). Students enrolled in any academic program, either full or part-time, are eligible.

What are the Characteristics of all Honors Courses and Honors Options Courses?

1. All Honors Courses and Honors Options Courses include the Honors Program Student Learning Outcomes: critical thinking, effective communication, ethical reasoning, civic engagement, leadership, and diversity.
2. Honors Courses and Honors Options Courses differ from “regular” courses in several ways. They explore the topic in more depth, and they require more critical thinking and analysis from the Honors Scholars. These courses usually require different teaching methods. They employ a greater variety of source materials. They also introduce Honors Scholars to the methods and standards of the discipline. Honors Courses are more rigorous and usually more enjoyable. Honors Scholars traditionally leave the Honors Program with a greater sense of accomplishment, greater confidence, and respect for the academic process.
3. Learning becomes a shared, dynamic process, shifting the classroom focus from the teacher to the Honors Scholar. The Honors Scholar assumes responsibility for his or her own learning. Challenging readings, especially primary sources and great works, are an integral part of the courses. Close analysis and interpretation of these texts teach Honors Scholars to think critically and to develop the confidence to deal with the larger issues and challenges of today’s world.
4. Discourse is the heart of an Honors Course or an Honors Option Contract. It arises from questions generated by reading and analyzing texts or problems. At first, questions may

¹ Applicants to the Program who graduated from high school more than five years prior to applying or have a GED must have completed six (6) credit hours at the college level and earned a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

be posed by the instructor, but as Honors Scholars gain confidence, they develop their own strategies for inquiry and criticism. Directed inquiry is the first step in making Honors Scholars independent and responsible learners.

Being an Honors Scholar

What is the Honors Program Portfolio?

Located on the Honors Program Blackboard site, the Honors Program Portfolio contains all of Honors Course Projects (both core courses and Honors Option Contracts) as well as evidence of civic engagement and/or leadership. Honors Scholars are responsible for uploading these documents to the Blackboard Honors Gradebook. These documents will be proof that scholars have completed all requirements of the Honors Program curriculum. For help uploading materials to be submitted to the portfolio, please contact the Honors Mentor for your school or campus. (See page 12 for contact information.)

What is the Procedure for Submitting an Honors Option Contract?

1. The Contract: The instructor, working with the Honors Scholar, will complete the Honors Option Contract. Honors Scholars will be responsible for submitting this contract to the Honors Mentor. The Contract will include the following.
 - a. A working title of the Honors Option Project
 - b. A description of the Honors Option Project
 - c. The requirements of the Honor Option Project must include one of the following:
 - 1) An essay of at least six to eight pages or the equivalent,
 - 2) An oral presentation, or
 - 3) Reflection of the project.
2. The Honors Option contract must be submitted by the fourth week of classes for 16-week semester or second week of an 8 week semester.

What Can I Use as Evidence of Civic Engagement and/or Leadership?

Examples of the following items that can be submitted to the Honors Portfolio in Blackboard.

- letter from faculty or administrator
- brochure mentioning your name
- symposium program
- newspaper article
- Documentation of leadership role in a club, organization, or Honor Society.

The Honors Program Curriculum

Honors Curriculum	Points	Options
Honors Courses		Minimum 0 Maximum 6
HON 101	3	Required if student has an elective degree option.
HON 201	3	Required in place of ENG 112.
Honors Option Contracts	3	Minimum 3 Maximum 9
Course Contracts		
Non-Course Contracts		
Honors Internship	3	Minimum 0 Maximum 6
Civic Engagement	1.5	Must meet requirement. Maximum 1.5
Service Scholar Hours		Other options must be approved by Honors Program. 25% more than required for graduation from Honors Program.
Organization Leadership		Must be approved by Honors Program, and provide documentation.
Symposium Presentation	1.5	Must meet requirement. Maximum 1.5
Campus Engagement	1	Minimum 1 Maximum 3
Honors Club Rep		2 semesters
Student Government		2 semesters
Campus Club/Org Leadership		2 semesters

*Please note: 15 points required to graduate as an honors scholar.

Honors Program Scholar Graduation Requirements

To graduate as an Honors Scholar, Scholars must:

1. Earn all required 15 points from the Honors Curriculum.
2. Earn a cumulative GPA of 3.5.
3. Earn a grade of A or B in Honors 101 (Critical Thinking Seminar) and Honors 201 (Interpretations Seminar).
4. Earn a grade of A or B in Honors Options Courses or designated Honors Sections.
5. Complete an Honors Portfolio by
 - Submitting to the Honors Program Blackboard site final projects.
 - Submitting to the Honors Program Blackboard site evidence of civic engagement and/or leadership, either within the classroom setting or outside the classroom.
6. Complete OCC graduation requirements.

Honors Mentors are available to meet with Scholars individually to help Scholars apply for the program, chart their Honors requirements, and find ways to take advantage of the many opportunities available through the Honors Program.

Honors Courses

The Owens Honors Curriculum is flexible and innovative, allowing a great deal of latitude in creating interesting and academically rigorous experiences. Honors Program Courses take one of two forms:

1. Core Courses: There are two core Honors Courses, HON 101 (Critical Thinking Seminar) and HON 201 (Interpretations Seminar). These courses are an integral part of the transfer agreements with UT and BGSU. They are the only classes with the HON prefix and may only be taken by students admitted to the Honors Program. **These courses do not need to be taken sequentially: HON 201 may be taken prior to or at the same time as HON 101.**

Important note: HON 201 may be used to fulfill ENG 112 (Composition II.)

2. Honors Option Courses: Most Owens courses can be made into Honors Option Courses. In these courses, the Scholar and the instructor agree on an Honors Option Contract. (See details below.) The instructor, working with the Scholar, completes an online Honors Option Contract that details the scope of the project. (See Honors Program website, “Forms.”) The Honors Option Contract must be submitted by the date designated on the contract form, located at [OCC Honors Application](#).

All Honors Option Contracts must meet the following minimum criteria:

1. Honors Option Coursework should be based on research, writing, and presentation. The research paper should be at least six pages beyond non-honors student assignments. It should demonstrate a command of the vocabulary and concepts of the subject, critical analysis and synthesis skill, problem solving, and mastery of the English language. The topic of each project should be unique; in other words, there should be no “blanket contracts” given to multiple Scholars in the same course section. Note: Usually, the Project is in the form of an essay, but depending upon the academic discipline in which the Project is done, other artifacts are possible, e.g., a photographic portfolio, a musical composition, a welding project, etc. Still, if doing a non-traditional Project, it should a reflection essay of sorts.
2. Honors coursework should meet at least **three of the four** Honors Program Student Learning Outcomes: **critical thinking, effective communication, ethical reasoning, civic engagement, leadership and diversity.**
3. Each Honors Option Contract should contain a presentation to be given in class, at the Honors Symposium, or at some other approved venue. A reflection paper can be submitted in lieu of a presentation at the discretion of the faculty member and Honors Mentor. The type of presentation in online courses will be determined by the faculty member, but must be stated in the Honors Option Contract. If special equipment is required, the instructor will make the arrangements.
4. Instructions for the Honors Options are found in the section “Honors Courses.”

Reminder:

An Honors Scholar must earn an A or B in an Honors Course or an Honors Option Course in order to receive Honors Credit. If the grade is lower than B, it will appear on the student’s transcript, but without the Honors designation.

For all Honors Courses and Honors Options Contracts, the Honors Scholar must submit the final project of the course to the Honors Program Blackboard site. The projects submitted constitute the Scholar’s Honors Portfolio.

Honors Code of Conduct

All Honors student will be held to the Owens Community College student code of conduct. The Student Code of Conduct contains all of the College processes and policies regarding conduct and expected behavior including academic misconduct. Please see more information at [OCC Student Code of Conduct](#).

The Honors Symposium

Each spring the Honors Program invites all students who have completed Honors Courses or Honors Option Contracts in the previous academic year to present their project(s) at this annual event. This is required at least once for each Honors student. This event is held in April or May, and the campus and community are invited to attend.

Presenting at the Symposium is a great resume builder and provides useful public speaking experience. The Honors Program Mentors are more than happy to help interest students prepare their presentations.

Inactivation from the Honors Program

Recently admitted students who complete no Honors coursework within two semesters of being accepted into the Program (exclusive of summer) will be removed from the Program. After being accepted into the Program, Honors Scholars are expected to work toward completion of the Honors Program requirements. Students who have done no Honors Program coursework for two consecutive semesters, exclusive of summer, will have to reapply to the Program. If an Honors student's GPA is below a 3.5 in any given semester, students will be notified of their probationary status within the program. If the GPA remains below a 3.5 for two consecutive semesters, students will be removed for the program and would need to reapply once their GPA meets or exceeds 3.5.

Special Features of the Owens Honors Program

The Honors Program has established articulation agreements with the University of Toledo, Bowling Green State University, and Eastern Michigan University that allow students who complete the program to integrate seamlessly into the honors programs of these institutions and be eligible for scholarships. Honors courses and individualized studies are designed to foster intellectual inquiry and growth by providing a dynamic environment that inspires rewarding intellectual pursuits. The program also facilitates student access to the College's educational resources and provides an opportunity for outstanding students and faculty to engage in exciting learning experiences.

Mentors

Honors Mentors are available to meet with students individually to help them apply for the Honors Program, chart their coursework, and find ways to take advantage of all the opportunities available through the Honors Program.

Contact Information

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