

TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY
HONORS COLLEGE
HANDBOOK
FOR
THE HONORS DEGREE PROGRAM



THE HONORS COLLEGE TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

Tarleton has two programs within the Honors College: the Honors Degree Program and the Presidential Honors Program. Although the requirements for the two programs differ, much of the Honors curriculum is the same, and participants in both programs contribute to Tarleton's Honors community and to the academic excellence of the entire campus.

The benefits, privileges, requirements, and expectations for the Honors Degree Program are outlined in this handbook.

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HISTORY

The fall of 2013 marked the transition of the Honors Programs into the Honors College, but the two Honors programs have a long history.

The Presidential Honors Program started in the fall of 1985 with fifteen students, and the curriculum consisted of two special Honors seminars. The size of the program has gradually increased to its current size of around sixty students, and the curriculum now includes Honors core courses, three Honors seminars, and a senior research project. The Presidential Honors scholarship amount has gradually increased from \$2,500 in 1985 to the current amount of \$7,000, which adds up to a \$28,000 scholarship over four years.

The Honors Degree Program offered its first Honors core course in 1990, one section of English 112 with twenty-five students. Now over 900 students participate in the Honors Degree Program, and the Honors College offers Honors sections of most core courses, special Honors seminars, as well as a number of upper-level Honors options. We also have a number of Honors Degree Program scholarships.

The Honors College now sponsors numerous cultural and academic enrichment events that are open to students in both Honors programs. And in the fall of 2016 the new Honors Hall opened, housing 440 Honors students and the offices of the Honors College.

HONORS DIRECTORS

1985-1988

Dr. Russell Long

Current: former President, West Texas A&M University

1988-1992

Dr. Mallory Young

Current: Professor of English and Languages, TSU

1992-1996

Dr. Patricia Zelman

Current: Professor of History, TSU

1996-present

Dr. Craig Clifford

Professor of Philosophy

Executive Director, Honors College

BENEFITS

The Honors Curriculum

As an Honors Scholar you will participate in an elevated core curriculum designed to challenge academically talented students. The Honors College offers special Honors sections of most core courses, including English, mathematics, political science, history, chemistry, geology, biology, physics, speech, psychology, philosophy, sociology, economics, and fine art. Honors classes are limited to a maximum of around twenty-five students; as a result, they tend to be conducted more along the lines of an upper-level seminar. They offer students intellectually challenging material, innovative approaches to the subject, increased opportunities for honing critical thinking and writing skills, and the opportunity to interact closely with other academically talented students. As a rule, Honors classes emphasize discussion and student participation, primary sources and monographs over textbooks, special lab equipment, student projects and research, and essay exams over multiple choice.

Scholarships

The Honors Degree Program offers a number of \$4,000 and \$1,000 scholarships, which are awarded on a competitive basis. Interested students should submit a Scholarship Application Form and a federal student aid application (FAFSA). Eligibility for continuation of the scholarship is evaluated at the end of each long semester. Recipients who fulfill the requirements outlined below will be considered for renewal of the scholarship for up to four years (see the section on “Requirements and Expectations” and the section on the “Probation and Expulsion Policy” below). In order for the scholarship to be renewed students must fill out a scholarship application and a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year. Renewal beyond the first year is contingent upon the availability of funds.

Early Registration

Returning Honors College Scholars register the week before regular registration begins for other Tarleton State University students. This puts them in a position to schedule their choice of classes for the following semester.

Special Housing Assignments

The Honors Hall is a coeducational facility with 440 resident spaces dedicated to housing Honors College students. Living in the Honors Hall enables you to interact more with the other students in the College, and it creates a stronger sense of an Honors community. Also, the administrative offices of the Honors College are located on the first floor of the Honors Hall. All incoming freshmen who are not approved to live off campus are housed in the Honors Hall.

Graduation Recognition

At graduation, you will wear a special stole with the Honors College emblem. All Honors courses are designated on your transcript. Also, graduates of the Honors College are recognized at a reception each fall and during Honors Week each April. You may also request a letter of recommendation from the director of the program for graduate school or professional school or for employment.

Opportunities for Summer Study Abroad in Urbino, Italy

Members of the Honors College have the opportunity to apply for admission to a four-week study abroad program in Urbino, Italy, one of the major centers of the Italian Renaissance. Students will receive up to six hours of Honors credit. Due to the generosity of donors, we are able to keep the price down. Students may also apply for a scholarship from the Office of International Academic Programs. For more information about the scholarship opportunities, costs, and course credits, see Dr. Clifford.

Opportunities for Cultural Enrichment

The Honors College provides many opportunities for cultural and educational enrichment. You will have an opportunity to attend a concert or performance at Bass Hall in Fort Worth each semester. You'll also have an opportunity to tour the Kimbell, Amon Carter, and Modern Art Museums in Fort Worth. The Visiting Scholars Program brings various scholars to campus for public lectures and guest lectures in Honors courses, as well as more informal interaction with students such as luncheons and receptions. Also, the Honors College hosts an Honors College Alumni Day each fall, which is a great opportunity for current honors students to network with honors graduates.

REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

Honors Core

The Honors Core consists of 15 hours of lower-level Honors classes. Students will either complete 15 hours of Honors core courses or 12 hours of Honors core courses and a sophomore three-hour Honors Seminar. Students who complete the 15 hours with a 3.0 or higher GPA, in their Honors classes and for their overall Tarleton GPA, will receive credit and recognition for completion of the Honors Core. Students who complete less than 15 hours of Honors core courses will receive credit and recognition for the courses they have completed. Students must maintain a 3.0 overall Tarleton GPA and a 3.0 GPA in their Honors classes to remain eligible to participate in the Honors Core. Until completion of the 15-hour Honors Core, in order to remain an active member of the Honors College students must complete at least one honors course each semester or receive special permission to be excused from this requirement from the director.

Upper-Level Honors

Eligible students include students who have completed Tarleton's Honors Core, students who have completed a lower-division Honors component comparable to Tarleton's Honors Core at a community college or another four-year institution, or students with a 3.2 or higher overall GPA (transfer students or continuing Tarleton students). Upper-Level Honors involves several options: Departmental Honors, two Honors Seminars, one Honors Seminar and a senior research project, or individualized upper-level Honors. Participants in Upper-Level Honors must maintain a 3.2 GPA.

GPA Requirement

Honors Core students must maintain a Tarleton overall GPA of 3.0 or higher and a 3.0 or higher in their Honors courses while Upper-Level Honors students must maintain a Tarleton overall GPA of 3.2 or higher. See "Probation and Expulsion Policy" below for exceptions to this rule.

Semester Hour Requirement

Honors Degree Program students must register for and complete at least twelve hours of solid academic courses each long semester.

Honors Advising

Prior to registering for the spring semester, first-semester freshmen will be advised by the Honors Advisor. After your first semester you are not required to be advised by the Honors Office, but you are of course welcome to ask for help in planning your schedule; and you are required to take at least one honors course each semester until you complete the 15-hour Honors Core (see “Honors Core” above).

Attendance at Honors College Functions / Assistance with the Program

We expect you to be an integral part of the program, to make a significant contribution to it and to take advantage of its opportunities. Students are expected to participate in a significant number of program events: occasional meetings, social events, cultural enrichment events, Honors College speaker series, receptions for new students, alumni forums, Honors College Alumni Day, etc. In some cases, attendance at particular events is required, e.g., the events during Honors Week. From time to time, you will also be expected to provide information to the director and to maintain communication with donors when applicable.

During the first year, Honors Degree Program students are required to attend a minimum of two Honors College–approved educational enrichment activities each semester. During the second year, you are required to attend a minimum of one each semester. During the third year, you are required to attend a minimum of one. The Honors College hosts several educational enrichment activities each semester.

Prompt Response to Requests for Information

We will communicate with you on a regular basis by e-mail, both to provide and to request information. You are expected to check your e-mail regularly and respond quickly to requests for information. You must maintain a Tarleton e-mail account and check it every day. Maintaining a Tarleton e-mail account includes monitoring your disk quota on the Tarleton server. Once you exceed your disk quota you cannot receive e-mail. If you ask us, we will try to send messages to an off-campus e-mail address as well, but we will hold you responsible for maintaining and checking your Tarleton e-mail account.

Leadership and Service

Members of the Tarleton community view the students in the Honors College as leaders and role models, and you should strive to live up to those expectations. We expect you to make a contribution to the Honors community and to the academic excellence of the University. Along these lines, we expect from you a reasonable level of campus and community service, especially activities that are related to your academic studies such as tutoring for courses in your major, participating in the Tarleton Scholars Society, helping with Campus in Action, and presenting your research at the Student Research Symposium in the fall and during Honors Week in the spring.

Expectations of Academic and Personal Integrity

Because you are a participant in a respected and prestigious program with a long history and a recipient of the many benefits and privileges associated with that program, we expect from you the highest standards of academic and personal integrity. You are expected to read and to abide by the University's policies on academic integrity and other matters of student conduct, but you are also expected to exhibit conduct befitting the status that the University and the Honors College has bestowed on you. *Nota bene:* We take these expectations just as seriously as the more technical academic requirements, and we expect you to do the same. The probation and expulsion policy outlined below applies to these expectations with the same force that it applies to the grade point requirement.

PROBATION AND EXPULSION POLICY

The requirement for remaining in the Honors Core is an overall Tarleton GPA of 3.0 or higher and a 3.0 or higher in the Honors classes. The requirement for remaining in upper-level Honors is a 3.2 overall TSU GPA. Students who do not have the required GPA level will be dropped from the program.

Students may, at the discretion of the director, be placed on probation or expelled from the program for violating University or Presidential Honors policies or for failure to fulfill any of the other requirements or expectations listed above.

Although this is extremely rare, students dropped from the program who later reach the required GPA level may be reinstated at the discretion of the director. The director will consider extenuating circumstances as well as the student's previous contributions to Tarleton and to the program. The student must submit a request in writing giving reasons for his or her reinstatement.

Decisions of the director concerning probation, expulsion, and reinstatement may be appealed to the Honors Advisory Committee.

HONORS STAFF

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair: Dr. Craig Clifford
Professor; Social Sciences

Dr. Trina Geye
Assistant Professor; Psychology

Dr. Derrill Watson
Assistant Professor; Economics

Dr. Daniel Marble
Professor; Physics

Dr. Heather Mathewson
Assistant Professor; Wildlife Science

Dr. Mallory Young
Professor; English and Languages

TARLETON SCHOLARS SOCIETY

The Tarleton Scholars Society (TSS) is a student organization dedicated to the promotion of academic excellence and the creation of an Honors community at Tarleton. The Society sponsors debates, panel discussions, and other events that contribute to the quality of academic life at Tarleton. Current participants in the Presidential Honors Program as well as students who are taking or have taken an Honors class offered by the Honors Degree Program are eligible to join. TSS sponsors campus and community events such as poetry contests, academic competitions in the local schools, and receptions for new Honors students.

For more information, e-mail honors@tarleton.edu.

HONORS CORE CURRICULUM ROTATION

The Honors College usually offers the same courses every year. Students are expected to plan ahead so that they can take advantage of as many Honors core courses as possible.

FALL SEMESTER

Speech

COMM 1311: Intro to Speech
COMM 1315: Public Speaking
COMM 2302: Business & Pro Speaking

English

ENGL 1301: Composition I
ENGL 1302: Composition II

History

HIST 1301: History of the U.S. I
HIST 1302: History of the U.S. II

Political Science

GOVT 2305: Federal Government
GOVT 2306: Texas Government

Psychology

PSY 2301: General Psychology

Philosophy

PHIL 1301: Intro to Philosophy
PHIL 1301: Intro to Philosophy (medical ethics)

Sociology

SOCI 1301: Introduction to Sociology

Geology

GEOL 1408: Natural Disasters

Biology

BIOL 1406 or 1407: Biology for Science Majors

Mathematics

MATH 2413: Calculus I

Fine Arts

FINA 1360: The Art of Film
DRAM 1310: Intro to the Theatre

Economics

ECO 2301: Principles of Macroeconomics

SPRING SEMESTER

Speech

COMM 1311: Intro to Speech
COMM 1315: Public Speaking
COMM 2302: Business & Pro Speaking

Chemistry

CHEM 1412: General Chemistry II

English

ENGL 1302: Composition II
ENGL 2350: Backgrounds of Western Lit

Geology

GEOL 1408: Natural Disasters

History

HIST 1301: History of the U.S. I
HIST 1302: History of the U.S. II

Political Science

GOVT 2305: Federal Government
GOVT 2306: Texas Government

Physics

PHYS 2426: University Physics II

Fine Arts

FINA 1360: The Art of Film
DRAM 1310: Introduction to Theatre

Psychology

PSY 2301: General Psychology

Philosophy

PHIL 1301: Intro to Philosophy
PHIL 1301: Intro to Philosophy (medical ethics)

Biology

BIOL 1406 or 1407: Biology for Science Majors

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Honors class that I need to take is full. What can I do?

Come to the Honors College office and ask for an override into the Honors class. If an override isn't possible, plan to take the course when it comes around the next time in the rotation.

How do the Honors sections differ from the regular sections?

Honors classes are limited to twenty-five students, but are often smaller. Typically, the Honors classes emphasize discussion and student participation, projects and research, and essay exams. Because of the small class size and the level of the students, the class discussions will be at a higher level. Also, Honors classes are typically taught by distinguished senior faculty. Generally speaking, Honors classes don't require a greater quantity of work, but the work is more challenging and intellectually stimulating.

How often do I need to check in with the Honors office?

Freshmen are required to contact the office in order to get their schedule approved before registering for courses. Occasionally, you may be asked to stop by to take care of a particular issue. Otherwise, you are welcome to stop by any time to chat, ask questions, or make suggestions. We also have computers available for student use in the office.

Why is it so important to check my e-mail frequently?

E-mail is the quickest and easiest way for us to contact you. We send many important messages each semester. For example, we might need to get a quick count so that we know how many tickets to buy to the Fort Worth Opera, or we might need information from you in order to write a report on Honors activities to justify the program to the Tarleton administration or to state officials or to donors. It is extremely important that you check your e-mail daily and quickly respond to any messages from the Honors staff.