



OWENS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Owens Community College

Honors Program

Faculty Handbook

2018

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The Owens Community College Honors Program:
Critical Thinking
Articulate Communication
Ethical Reasoning
Civic Engagement and Leadership

The Honors Program Mission

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

The Honors Program Vision

The Honors Program offers students a wide variety of challenging courses in every department and program in the college. The Honors Program also encourages full access to the college's educational resources and faculties, challenging students to initiate, create and think critically. Special honors courses and individualized studies are designed to foster intellectual inquiry and growth. The most inviting aspect of Owens Honors is the way it brings together outstanding students and faculty in exciting learning encounters. The result is a dynamic environment that inspires the student in unparalleled intellectual pursuits.

The Honors Program Student Learning Outcomes

By fulfilling the Honors Program requirements for graduation, the Honors Scholar also fulfills the program's student learning outcomes. The Owens Community College Honors Program Student Learning Outcomes are:

Critical Thinking

Honors Scholars will:

- Analyze spoken, written, or graphic texts.
- Identify the argument in a given text and articulate the disciplinary, historical, or cultural assumptions behind it.
- Apply knowledge creatively to solve problems and explain issues.

Articulate Communication

Honors Scholars will:

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

Ethical Reasoning

Honors Scholars will:

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

Civic Engagement and 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 to 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.

Honors Scholars

Who are Honors Scholars?

Students participating in the program are designated **Honors Scholars**.

Honors Scholars are highly motivated students who wish to go beyond the minimum requirements for graduation from Owens Community College. They must complete an online application form and demonstrate their academic potential and motivation.

Faculty recommendation is the most effective way of identifying and recruiting Honors Scholars. When recommending students to the Honors Program, faculty should consider whether the student exhibits the following:

1. excellence in a given academic area, as demonstrated by grades
2. intellectual curiosity—the desire to learn more than the minimum
3. open-mindedness and a tolerance for diverse perspectives
4. engagement and in-class participation
5. willingness and ability to work independently
6. initiative and responsibility
7. dependability, attendance and punctuality

Reasons to Become an Honors Scholar

- Small, interactive core Honors Courses and meaningful student/faculty interaction in courses designated as Honors Option Courses.
- Individualized academic and career advisement from a faculty mentor focused on student success.
- Enriching out-of-classroom activities.
- Campus leadership roles and eligibility for membership in a national honor society: Phi Theta Kappa.
- Participation in the annual Honors Symposium held each spring.
- Honors designation on degree and transcript.
- Recognition as Honors graduate at Commencement with the presentation of the Owens Honors Program Medallion.
- Enhanced preparation for entering baccalaureate and advanced programs.
- Eligibility for scholarships at four-year institutions.

Eligibility 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:

1. have a 3.2 high school GPA
2. be admitted as a College Credit Plus Program student
3. have a minimum of 3.2 college GPA with 6 credits completed (a GPA of 3.5 is required for Honors distinction at the time of graduation).
4. submit two faculty recommendations if GPA is between 3.0-3.2
5. applicants to the Program who have graduated from high school more than five years prior to applying must have completed at least six credit hours of college-level credit.

The Honors Program Curriculum

Requirements for Graduation with Honors Program Distinction

Honors Scholars take a total of 15 credit hours of Honors courses:

- two required courses (HON 101 and HON 201) and
- nine credit hours of elective Honors Option Courses.

The core courses may count as Arts and Humanities electives. The remaining nine credit hours may be courses within the Honors Scholar's program of study.

Honors Scholars demonstrate civic engagement and/or leadership.

To graduate as an Honors Scholar and receive the Honors Program Medallion, a student must:

1. Earn a cumulative GPA of 3.5.
2. Earn a grade of A or B in Honors 101 (Critical Thinking Seminar) and Honors 201 (Interpretations Seminar). These courses also count towards the student's Arts and Humanities electives.
3. Earn a grade of A or B in nine credit hours of Honors Options Courses.
4. Complete an Honors Portfolio by:
 - Submitting to the Honors Program Blackboard site final projects from five Honors Courses
5. Complete OCC graduation requirements.

Honors Program Advisors are available to meet with students individually to help them apply to the Honors Program, chart their coursework, 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 instructors a great deal of latitude in creating interesting and academically rigorous experiences. Honors Program Courses take one of two forms:

1. Required 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, BGSU and Eastern Michigan University. They are the only classes with the HON prefix and may only be taken by students admitted to the Honors Program.
2. Honors Option Courses: Most Owens courses can be Honors Option Courses. In these courses a student in the Honors Program and the instructor agree on an Honors Option Contract (see details below). Within the first ten days of class, the Honors Scholar fills out an Honors Option Registration Form, obtains the instructor's signature, and submits the completed form to the Honors Program Office (Founders Hall in Toledo or Timothy Rice's office, EC 121R, in Findlay). The instructor, working with the Honors Scholar, then completes an online Honors Option Contract that details the scope of the project (see Honors Program website, "For Faculty"). The Honors Option Contract must be submitted by the fourth week of the semester. The actual due dates of the Contracts for each semester can be found here: <https://www.owens.edu/honors/forms.html>. Faculty will receive additional compensation (\$173) for students participating in Honors Options in their class.

All Honors Option Contracts must meet the following minimum criteria:

- 1) Honors coursework should be based on research, writing, and presentation. The research paper should be at least six pages (or measurable equivalent) beyond non-honors student assignments. It should demonstrate a command of the vocabulary and concepts of the subject, critical analysis and synthesis, problem solving, and mastery of the English language.
- 2) Honors coursework should meet **three of the four Honors Program Student Learning Outcomes: critical thinking, articulate communication, ethical reasoning, and civic engagement/leadership**. (Please see page 4 of this document.)
- 3) The Honors Scholar prepares a presentation to be given in class, at the annual OCC Honors Symposium (held each spring semester, typically in April), or at some other approved venue. Presentations must also be completed in online courses. The type of presentation in online courses is at the discretion of the faculty member, but must be stated in the Honors Contract. This may take any

number of forms. If special equipment is required, the instructor will make the arrangements.

- 4) Honors Scholars are expected to interact, participate fully and be role models to other students in the class.
- 5) Though not encouraged by the Honors Program, it is possible to cancel the contract without penalty to the student if necessary.

Honors Scholars 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 notation.

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.

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 event is usually held in April, and the campus and community are invited to attend.

For Honors Faculty

Who are Honors Faculty?

1. Honors Faculty are committed faculty who are enthusiastic about teaching and working with students. Honors faculty must be dedicated to high-quality, academically rigorous teaching and learning. Faculty may complete an Honors Option Contract or teach a core Honors Course. It is highly recommended that faculty new to the Honors Program meet with the Honors Advisor prior to submitting an Honors Course or an Honors Option Contract.
2. Honors Faculty receive a stipend of \$173 per Honors Option student enrolled in a regular section of their courses (those who have completed the Honors Program Option Contract). Contracts must be received by the deadline specified on the Honors Option contract in order for faculty to receive the proper compensation. Faculty teaching core Honors Courses receive no additional compensation.

Characteristics of all Honors Courses and Honors Options Courses:

1. All Honors Courses and Honors Options Courses should include the Honors Program Student Learning Outcomes: critical thinking, articulate communication, ethical reasoning, and civic engagement/leadership. (Please see page 4 for a fuller discussion.)
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 students. These courses usually require different teaching methods. They employ a greater variety of source materials. They also introduce students to the methods and standards of the discipline. Honors Courses should be more rigorous and are usually more enjoyable. Students traditionally leave the Honors Program with a greater sense of accomplishment, greater confidence and a respect for the academic process.
3. Learning becomes a shared, dynamic process, shifting the classroom focus from the teacher to the student. The student assumes responsibility for his or her own learning. Challenging readings, especially primary sources and great works, should be an integral part of the course. Close analysis and interpretation of these texts teach students 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. It should arise from questions generated by reading and analyzing texts or problems. At first, questions may be posed by the instructor, but as students gain confidence, they should develop their own strategies for inquiry and criticism. Directed inquiry is the first step in making students independent and responsible learners.

Instructions for Honors Options Contracts

1. An Honors Scholar is registered for your class and requests Honors Option coursework. The instructor, working with the Honors Scholar, completes the Honors contract (on the Honors website) and submits it to the Honors Program Office (Founders Hall). The contract will include
 - a. Description of the Honors Option Project: paper and oral presentation.
 - b. Information about how the Honors Option Project will be assessed and calculated into the overall course grade.
 - c. Explanation about how the Honors Option Project meets the Student Learning Outcomes of the Honors Program.
2. Honors Option Contracts may be submitted before the course begins, but must be submitted by the fourth week of classes (16-week semester) at the latest.

Structure of the Honors Program

The Honors Program Office is located in Founders Hall, Toledo Campus. Dr. Russell Bodi (russell_bodi@owens.edu (567-661-7523) serves as the Director of the Honors Program.

Honors Program Advisors

Cory Hoover (567-661-7096, Toledo) and Tim Rice (567-429-3673, Findlay) are the Honors Advisors on the Toledo and Findlay campuses, respectively. They may be reached by email at cory_hoover@owens.edu, timothy_rice@owens.edu, or at honorsprogram@owens.edu.

History of the Owens Honors Program

After years of conceptual development, the Honors Program at Owens Community College was established in 2008 as a result of the initiative of Dean Gerry Bazer; Provost, Dr. Paul

Unger; and Vice President Dr. Bruce Busby. The immediate goal of the program was to meet the needs of exceptional students. Since its inception, the program has grown to include community and college-wide enhancement and interdisciplinary involvement. In 2008, under the chairmanship of Kathleen Attwood, the program created articulation agreements with the University of Toledo and Bowling Green State University.

Initially, the program requirements included Critical Thinking, Great Readings, Honors Ethics, the conversion of a non-honors course into an honors course, and a capstone course. Under this rubric, the program graduated its first student, LaDonna Knabbs, in spring 2009, four students in fall 2009, and two students in spring 2010.

Program revisions were instituted in summer 2010 to increase the opportunity for participation among qualified students and interested faculty throughout the College by streamlining the program's structure.

Special Features of the Honors Program

The 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.

Acknowledgement

The Owens Community College Honors Program extends grateful appreciation to the Honors Program at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio for their ideas and support. Many of the revisions to the Program since 2007 are derived directly from the groundwork already begun by Sinclair Community College in Dayton, OH.