Overview of the College

FALL 2015

College Components

- Advising & priority registration
- Honors Coursework
  - First year: Freshman English (fall) & First Year Seminar (spring)
  - Four Honors courses at the 200-level
  - Junior Colloquium (Honors 380)
- Senior Thesis or Project
  - Independent research in the department of your major
  - Alternative projects include service, teaching, internships and cross-cultural symposia

College Benefits

- Computers in the Honors Study Area (2nd floor of the Campus Center)
- Special events
  - Orientation for new students
  - Welcome back reception for continuing students
  - End-of-semester celebration
  - Regularly scheduled events with returning alumni
  - Participation in the State-wide Undergraduate Research Conference
- Honors Student Recognition
  - Classroom Leadership Awards
  - Undergraduate Research Funds
  - Graduating with Honors and the Medallion Ceremony
  - Applying to post-college fellowships

College Requirements & Policies

- Fulfilling university-wide requirements while in the Honors College
  - General Education Requirements
  - First-Year Writing Requirement
  - Writing Proficiency
  - Diversity Requirement
- Additional Honors College Requirements in Math & Foreign Language (one of two options):
  - Pre-calculus or statistics, and intermediate language
  - Calculus, and elementary language
- Grade Point Average
- Honors Grades and the Pass/Fail Option
- Progress in the college
- Leaving the college
- Study Abroad Waivers
Advising & Priority Registration

Every Honors College student is required to meet with his/her Honors advisor at least once a semester, ordinarily prior to or during the pre-registration period. Students will receive instructions each semester on how to register for their advising appointments during the pre-registration period. All Honors students – regardless of credits earned – are eligible to register for their non-Honors and Honors courses online through WISER starting on the first day of the registration period. The Honors College is also committed to offering year-round access to advising on a range of issues, and it encourages students to take advantage of this service.

Honors Coursework

Honors students complete a minimum of 18 credits in Honors courses. Course descriptions of our offerings each semester are available on WISER and the Honors College website.

First Year: In the fall, students take an Honors-level course in English composition. In the spring, students take an Honors First Year Seminar, which entails an exploration of how knowledge is constructed and communicated with emphases on the uses of language and technology. FIND: the first-year immersion and narratives of discovery, with its core and elective components – for more information on FIND, visit www.umb.edu/academics/honors/find. (These requirements are waived for students admitted to the Honors College after the freshman year.)

Four Honors courses at the 200-level: These are interdisciplinary courses that span the sciences, arts, humanities and social sciences – designed by faculty just for honors students. The small course sizes foster deep discussions and individual attention from faculty. Completion of two 200-level honors courses is a pre-requisite for the Junior Colloquium. (Note that typically one 200-level course is offered each summer, for students interested in completing Honors coursework during summer session.) One of the 200 level courses is typically the Honors 210G, and it fulfills the Intermediate Seminar requirement, which is a General Education requirement.

Junior Colloquium (Honors 380): This course should be taken prior to beginning the senior thesis, and is thus ideally taken during junior year. Through a multidisciplinary engagement with a specific topic and through the presentations of guest speakers, the colloquium builds the skills necessary to the research process. This course is designed to prepare students for the tasks they will encounter in their senior year as they write their senior honors thesis.

Senior Thesis or Project

The Senior Thesis requirement is ordinarily met under the jurisdiction of the student’s major department (and follows all regulations set by the department), which earns the student Honors in the major, while also satisfying Honors College requirements. Senior theses commonly entail research projects in the discipline of one’s major, but can center on either on-campus or off-campus research experiences. Course credit can be obtained (e.g. Independent Study registration) during the one or two semesters when the thesis work is ongoing. All senior theses or projects must be presented publicly in some forum, in some manner, and all projects must also be passed by a committee of faculty readers (not just by the student’s thesis director). If a department does not require such a public presentation, the Honors College will make appropriate arrangements. The College also encourages the presentation of such projects at state-wide and national conferences on undergraduate research. Thesis policies and requirements are detailed in a handout available from the staff of the Honors College.

Alternative senior projects are also available, including service learning, teaching opportunities (e.g. a two-semester structured experience serving as a student teacher), campus-sponsored research programs (e.g. semester on Nantucket), and enrollment in a Cross-Cultural Symposium. Cross-Cultural Symposia are year-long Honors courses that, in the past, have included: “Epidemics” and “Libraries & the Construction of Knowledge.”
Computers in the Honors Study Area
Computers and desks are available in the Honors Study Area on the 2nd floor of the Campus Center. The study area is open from 8:30am-5pm, and computers print to the nearest pay-to-print station.

Special Events
The Honors College organizes frequent events to encourage social and intellectual engagement with Honors students and staff, including:
- Orientation for new students
- Welcome back reception for continuing students
- End-of-semester celebration
- Regularly scheduled events for current students to which we invite returning alumni
- Participation in the State-wide Undergraduate Research Conference

Additional special events, such as seminars and guest speakers, are arranged throughout the year by Honors College staff, and by members of the student-run Honors organizations (the Honors Student Union, Writ Large, and Honors Helping Hands).

Honors Student Recognition
Classroom Leadership Awards are given to the Honors student in each Honors course who is identified by the course faculty as exhibiting not only authentic engagement with his or her own learning, but also sustained, enlightened and effective leadership in contributing to the learning of others.

Undergraduate Research Funds: Each year, students can apply for undergraduate research funds to cover expenses related to their research, creative projects, and scholarship. Please contact the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs (www.umb.edu/orsp) for more information.

Graduating as an Honors College Scholar and the Medallion Ceremony: Seniors who successfully complete all requirements of the Honors College are recognized at a special Honors College Medallion Ceremony. Outstanding performance of one Honors College graduate each year is acknowledged through award of the Robert H. Spaethling Prize. One Honors College graduate each year receives the Blair-Moulton Travel Grant to provide the opportunity of a travel experience immediately following the senior year.

Applying to post-college Fellowships: The Honors College encourages students in their junior or senior year to apply for major fellowships for post-college study, such as Rhodes, Fulbright, Gates, National Science Foundation, Goldwater, Marshall, and Pickering Foreign Affairs fellowships. In recent years, five honors graduates have studied abroad as Fulbright fellows (two in England, one in Norway, one in Japan, and one in India), one graduate received a Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship, and another graduate studied abroad as a Marshall scholar.
Fulfilling University-wide Requirements while in the Honors College

General Education Requirements: Honors students do not have to complete two sets of requirements. The Honors College provides an alternative means of completing the University’s General Education requirements, because the Honors First Year Seminar and all 200-level Honors courses can be applied to these requirements. It is possible to complete all the General Education requirements and almost all of the Honors College requirements simultaneously, with the same set of courses. Progress towards fulfilling the General Education requirements should be discussed during pre-registration advising each semester.

One (1) Honors 200-level course can be used to fulfill the Intermediate Seminar requirement in most colleges. Each remaining Honors 200-level course can be used to fulfill a single distribution area (i.e. AR, HU, SB, NS, WC). Currently, assignment of Honors courses to these requirements is done on an individual basis, and Honors courses do not immediately appear on a student’s audit as having fulfilled general education or distribution requirements. Currently, the Honors College must certify completion in writing to the registrar, and this should be done no later than the last semester of Junior year. This will be changing during the 2015-16 academic year, at which point, these courses will automatically fulfill the corresponding distribution areas in your degree audit.

Note that, if general education requirements are completed prior to admission to the Honors College, Honors courses will count as elective credit only.

First-Year Writing Requirement: This university-wide requirement is fulfilled by first-year students in the Honors College taking an Honors section of English in their fall semester.

Writing Proficiency: This requirement is fulfilled either by exam or by portfolio for students in CLA, CSM, and CNHS, and should be completed by the time each student has completed 60 credits. Students in CM fulfill this requirement through special Business Communications (BC) coursework.

Diversity Requirement: The Honors College does not currently offer any courses that fulfill the diversity requirement. Since this requirement, unlike other General Education requirements, can be met through courses at any level (100, 200, 300), it is straightforward to fulfill for most students. Note that most colleges have two diversity requirements, i.e. U.S. Diversity and International Diversity.

Additional Honors College Requirements in Math and Foreign Language

Honors students are required to complete either:

- Math through the pre-calculus or statistics (Math 130) level and foreign language study through the intermediate (201/202) level, OR
- Math through the Calculus (Math 140) level and foreign language study through the elementary (101/102) level

Substitutes for Math 130 include Math 125 and Math 129, as well as some Computer Science courses. Majors in Psychology, Sociology, Political Science and Economics may substitute the statistics course offered by their major. (Students are advised, however, that these courses usually do not count for the Math Distribution requirement that is part of the Gen Ed requirements.) Science and Math Majors are reminded to make sure that the math courses they select are also acceptable to their major departments.

All or part of the Honors requirement in language may be met through testing, or through high school study. (Three consecutive years of one language is equivalent to elementary proficiency.) Bilingual students who have been given General Education credit for a first language do not need to meet an additional language requirement. The College also accepts American Sign Language in fulfillment of this requirement, but students should be aware that access to intermediate level courses in ASL is often difficult to obtain.
Grade Point Average

For students who enrolled in the Honors College prior to Fall 2014:
A grade point average of 3.2 is required to maintain good standing in the Honors College. Students whose GPA falls below this level will be contacted by the college, and will ordinarily not be allowed to take Honors courses until the GPA reaches 3.2. Such students are expected to achieve the minimum GPA in the following semester’s work. In any case, the required GPA of 3.2 must be attained in order to graduate as an Honors College Scholar. Students should also keep in mind that major departments typically require a higher average in the major for admission to the department’s specific Senior Honors options.

For students who enroll in the Honors College in Fall 2014 (or later):
A grade point average of 3.3 is required to maintain good standing in the Honors College. Students whose GPA falls below this level will be contacted by the college, and will ordinarily not be allowed to take Honors courses until the GPA reaches 3.3. Such students are expected to achieve the minimum GPA in the following semester’s work. In any case, the required GPA of 3.3 must be attained in order to graduate as an Honors College Scholar. Students should also keep in mind that major departments typically require a higher average in the major for admission to the department’s specific Senior Honors options.

Honors Grades and the Pass/Fail Option

Only those Honors courses in which the student earns a grade of B or better can count toward the Honors requirements (although an Honors course for which a grade lower than a B is obtained may still be used to fulfill a Gen Ed requirement). Honors students may elect the Pass/Fail option for an Honors course, but then that course will not count toward Honors requirements; the student will eventually have to complete an additional Honors course with a grade of B or better. The use of the Pass/Fail option is also discouraged (but not forbidden) in non-Honors courses required by the college – i.e. courses taken to fulfill the Math and Foreign Language requirements.

Progress in the College

Students who are not making satisfactory progress towards completing Honors requirements may be asked to leave the College, regardless of their academic standing.

Leaving the College

Students who decide to leave the College are urged, for reasons of practicality and courtesy, to arrange an interview with the Dean. Such students do not lose General Education credit for their Honors courses, but the assignment of this credit is not automatic. (Such assignment toward General Education credit must be certified in writing by the Honors College.) The College and its faculty are also eager to learn from such students how well or not well the College has met their needs and interests.

Study Abroad Waivers

One Honors 200-level course may be waived for students who choose to study abroad.