



HONORS COLLEGE

**The Honors College at  
Marshall University**

Policy Handbook

**April 2024**

## **PURPOSE**

This handbook offers basic information about the policies and practices of the Honors College at Marshall University. The information here is subject to periodic revision. Because all students in the Honors College are students of the University, the Honors College operates under policies and guidelines as set for all undergraduate students at Marshall University.

Students of the Honors College, who will be known as Honors Scholars, are strongly advised to consult regularly with the Honors Advisor and the College website ([www.marshall.edu/honors](http://www.marshall.edu/honors)) in order to remain informed of any changes in College policies.

## **MISSION**

The Honors College at Marshall University provides an environment for innovative teaching and learning within an interdisciplinary curriculum motivated by creative, critical inquiry and respect for a multiplicity thoughts, experiences, and identities. The Honors College collaborates with university and public partners to foster inclusive academic excellence in a diverse and supportive community of scholars dedicated to becoming socially conscious, responsible leaders and lifelong learners engaged in the acquisition and application of knowledge for a greater good.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of the Honors College curriculum, Honors Scholars will:

- make connections while adapting and applying skills and learning among varied disciplines, domains of thinking, experiences, and situations.
- outline divergent solutions to a problem, develop and explore potentially controversial proposals, and synthesize ideas or expertise to generate original plans and approaches.
- evaluate the effectiveness of their own work, reflect on strengths and weakness of their knowledge and skills in defined areas, and devise ways to make improvements.
- produce cohesive oral, written, and visual communications capable of connecting effectively with specific audiences.
- appraise how cultural beliefs and practices affect inter-group communication, how specific approaches to global issues may affect communities differently, and how varying economic, religious, social, or geographical interests can result in conflict.
- demonstrate principles of ethical citizenship and socially responsible leadership through collaborative partnerships.
- evaluate how academic theories and public policy inform one another to support civic well-being.

## **POLICIES**

The Honors College Curriculum and Policies Committee [HCCAP] serves as an advisory body for the college on all policies as well as a review board for applications to the college (e.g., from faculty for proposed seminars). Voting membership consists of:

- seven faculty representatives, ideally representing each of the seven University colleges, who serve two-year terms at the invitation of the Dean of the Honors College
- two student representatives, who serve one-year terms at the invitation of the Dean of the Honors College
- the Dean of the College, who serves as Chair
- the Honors Advisor, who serves as a non-voting member of the committee

The college will maintain this Policy Handbook for public access on the Honors College website.

## **ADMISSION**

### **Incoming First-Year Students**

Incoming first-year students who have been accepted to Marshall University have two pathways to admission in the Honors College.

#### **Admission by Invitation**

Incoming first-year students who have been accepted to Marshall University and have a composite ACT score at least 26 (1230 SAT composite or higher) and a high school GPA of at least 3.5 are invited to join the Honors College. There is no separate application for admission to the college via this pathway to admission. The stated test scores and GPA must be achieved and reported to the university before the college's stated deadline, typically 01 May.

#### **Admission by Holistic Review**

Students admitted to Marshall who do not meet the minimum test score that would lead an automatic invitation to be admitted to the Honors College but do have at least a 3.5 high school GPA may still apply for admission to the Honors College. Students may request and be provided with a separate application for admission to the Honors College. Requests for admission in the Fall semester will be reviewed on a rolling basis, typically through 15 April each year.

### **Current, Transfer and Late-Admitted (Spring Semester) Students**

Current, transfer, and first-year, incoming students admitted to start at Marshall University in the Spring semester have two pathways for admission. The pathway available to them

will depend on their particular situation. All requests for admission (Admission by Invitation pathway) or applications for admission (Admission by Holistic Review pathway) must be made before the end of the 7th week of the semester.

## **Fall Semester**

### **Admission by Invitation**

**Current** students admitted to Marshall to begin their degree requirements in the Fall semester who are **NOT classified as transfer students** (students who began their Baccalaureate degree elsewhere before coming to Marshall) and who have not yet earned a GPA at Marshall but have at least a 3.5 high school GPA and at least a 26 ACT or 1230 SAT composite score, can request to be considered for a late “Admission by Invitation,” which does not require an application. This pathway to admission is only available in the Fall semester for current students.

### **Admission by Holistic Review**

**Current** students (continuing at Marshall from an earlier semester) and qualified **transfer** students (*students who began their Baccalaureate degree elsewhere before coming to Marshall*) with at least a 3.5 college GPA (earned at Marshall for current students) in at least 12 completed credit hours, who will have **no more than 30 earned credit-hours** at the end of the Fall semester, may petition for admission by requesting to submit an application to the college. At the time of application, both current and transfer students may request a waiver of up to 6 hours of General Honors credits toward completion of the required Honors Curriculum.

## **Spring Semester**

### **Admission by Invitation for Late-Admitted, Spring Semester Students**

Students admitted to Marshall to begin their degree requirements in the Spring semester who are **NOT classified as transfer students** (students who began their Baccalaureate degree elsewhere before coming to Marshall) and who have not yet earned a GPA at Marshall but have at least a 3.5 high school GPA and at least a 26 ACT or 1230 SAT composite score, can request to be considered for late “Admission by Invitation,” which does not require an application. This pathway to admission is only available in the Spring semester for late-admitted students.

### **Admission by Holistic Review**

**Current** students (continuing at Marshall from an earlier semester), incoming students admitted late (after the Fall semester), and qualified **transfer** students (*students who began their Baccalaureate degree elsewhere*

*before coming to Marshall)* with at least a 3.5 college GPA (earned at Marshall for current students) in at least 12 completed credit hours, who will have **no more than 30 earned credit-hours** at the end of the Spring semester, may petition for admission by requesting to submit an application to the college. At the time of application, both current and transfer students may request a waiver of up to 6 hours of General Honors credits toward completion of the required Honors Curriculum.

**NOTE:** *Due to a policy of the Office of Student Financial Assistance, the Honors College Scholarship (which is a partial tuition-waiver) can only be awarded to incoming, first-year students at Marshall (i.e., students who have not yet begun their coursework at Marshall as fully admitted students pursuing an undergraduate degree). Incoming, first-year students beginning in the Spring semester would be eligible to receive 1/2 of the scholarship for that academic year but could begin receiving the full scholarship award in their first full year—as long as they maintain good standing in the Honors College.*

## **BENEFITS TO STUDENTS**

Students admitted to the Honors College are extended the following opportunities and benefits:

- Merit-based scholarships
- Experiential learning opportunities
- Honors House living in the First Year Residence Halls & Willis Hall (For questions regarding housing please go to Housing and Residence Life)
- Early course registration privileges
- Opportunities for travel support to present at conferences or study abroad
- Smaller class sizes for HON and most H-designated courses
- Interesting interdisciplinary, upper-level Honors seminars
- Membership in the Honors College Student Association (HCSA)
- Extended library borrowing
- A computer lab with printing in Old Main
- A study lounge in Old Main
- Graduating with University Honors through the Honors College, which is recognized on a student's transcript, at the Elizabeth Gibson Drinko Honors Convocation, and with an awarded Honors Medallion that can be worn at graduation

## **CURRICULUM**

In order to graduate in University Honors through the Honors College, in addition to completing the Honors Curriculum, all Honors College students must fulfill general university requirements as well as the specific requirements of their academic colleges and majors. Many General Education requirements of the university can be fulfilled while

earning General Honors credits at the same time. A list of available honors courses is posted to the Honors College website in advance of each semester as soon as the schedule is prepared by the Registrar.

The HCCAP Committee approves the Honors College curriculum and any significant policy changes or revisions.

Honors students are required to complete a total of **24** credit hours in Honors as follows:

***Core Honors*** [12 credit hours]

- **Lower-Division Seminars** (6 credit hours)
  - FYS 100H – First-Year Seminar (a General Education course)
  - HON 200 – Second-Year Seminar
- **Upper-Division Seminars & Selected Experiential Learning Courses** (6 credit hours)

All students must complete **at least ONE section of HON 480** and may take either one section of HON 300 or HON 481 or two sections (total of 3 credits in sequence over one academic year) of HON 490 as an alternative to a section of HON 480. Historically, most students complete two sections of HON 480.

- **HON 300** – Honors Peer Mentors & Leaders
- **HON 480** – Special Topics Honors Seminars
- **HON 481** – Special Topics Experiential Learning
- **HON 490** – TEDxMarshallU Internship (requires taking two consecutive semesters for a total of 3 credit hours; students must apply to TEDx licensee for an intern position)

***General Honors*** [12 credit hours]

This part of the curriculum may be fulfilled through some combination of the following:

- **Departmental, honors-designated [H] courses** – Courses offered by various departments to honors students (typically as General Education courses), e.g., ANT 201H. Find a list of courses offered with an honors-designated section each semester on our website: <https://www.marshall.edu/honors/courses/>.
- **Additional sections of HON 300, HON 480, HON 481, or HON 490** that are not being counted toward upper-division requirements.
- **Other experiential learning and collaborative courses or co-curricular opportunities**, including:
  - HON 484 – *The Honors Oracle* (newsletter)

- HON 488 – Honors College Student Association (HCSA) Steering Committee (an MU SGA-recognized organization)
- [Study abroad](#) -- May be substituted for up to 6 credit hours through an arrangement with the Honors College. See the [Forms](#) page for details.
- **Honors Options Contracts** – With a Faculty Mentor to enhance a non-Honors course (proposal for h-option must be approved by Honors College). See the [Forms](#) page for details. *This is generally not recommended. Must seek approval in advance*
- Completing ***Approved Honors Experiences*** as outlined below

No more than 6 credit hours in “administrative” honors courses (HON 488 or HON 484) may be applied toward fulfilling the General Honors credit requirement.

To graduate in University Honors through the Honors College, students must complete a minimum of 15 of the required 24 credits in courses listed in the schedule as HON or in Honors-designated, departmental courses listed with the “H” designation.

Honors credit waivers for dual credit, AP, or IB courses (college credit earned prior to high school graduation) may be available as outlined under *Approved Honors Experiences* below.

**At most 6 hours of the Honors Curriculum may be waived for any reason.**

### **HONORS 480 SEMINARS**

As specified in a proposal submission process available on the Honors College website, the College receives seminar proposals from tenured, tenure-track, and adjunct faculty. HCCAP-approved, upper-division seminars are offered to Honors students as Special Topics sections of HON 480 in an agreed-upon semester.

- Proposals from faculty must be interdisciplinary in focus and methods and must meet the criteria outlined on the submission form, including a course description, learning outcomes, pedagogies, assignments, and relevant attributes.
- Seminars must offer discussion and/or fieldwork and/or group work as well as lecture and reading and must involve writing. Attention to oral communication skills is encouraged.
- Seminars carry at least 3 credit hours each.
- Enrollment is generally capped at 15 students. With the instructor’s approval, up to 3 additional seats may be added. Seminars whose enrollment does not meet the minimums set by Academic Affairs may be canceled.
- Upon application to and approval by the Honors College Curriculum and Policy Committee (HCCAP), a faculty member may teach successive honors seminars (within prescribed limits, as noted in the item below) by submitting the Application for Repeat Honors Seminar form available through the Honors College website.
- Faculty may teach the same Honors Seminar for a total of 3 times or 3 years, whichever comes first. Upon approval, faculty may continue to teach an Honors

Seminar by either submitting a New Honors Seminar Proposal form (for an entirely new proposed seminar) or by significantly updating a time-limited, existing seminar and then submitting an Updated Honors Seminar Proposal form. These forms can be found on the Honors College website.

## **APPROVED HONORS EXPERIENCES**

### ***DUAL CREDIT, AP, AND IB CREDITS***

A portion of General Honors credit hours may be waived by college credit earned through dual-credit, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or college classes completed while in high school. A grade of A or B is required in order for either dual-credit or college hours to apply and AP and IB test scores must qualify for credit at Marshall. General Honors credits may be waived according to the following scale:

- 15-29 credits: 3 credit General Honors waiver
- 30+ credits: 6 credit General Honors waiver

To receive Honors credit, students must petition the college by the end of their first semester using the Waiver Appeal for College Credit Earned Prior to High School Graduation form found on the Honors College website. Students are normally notified of the opportunity for this waiver during their mandatory First-Year Check-In advising appointment.

### ***STUDY ABROAD***

The Honors College strongly encourages students to consider studying abroad as undergraduates. To that end, the College will waive up to 6 of the required General Honors credit hours for study abroad experiences for which the student receives academic credit through Marshall. To receive a waiver of 3 honors credits, students must earn a minimum of 3 transfer credits, and the study abroad experience must have a duration of *at least* 3 weeks. A total of 6 credits of waived honors credit can be awarded for a semester abroad with full time enrollment of 12 credits or more. Students must request the waiver by submitting the Study Abroad Honors Credit Waiver Petition form on the Honors College website. To receive waiver of General Honors credits, students must submit a form to describe enhanced academic experiences that they expect to have *before* they leave and submit an additional form to justify why these credits deserve an honors credit waiver *after* they return.

### ***GRADUATE COURSES***

Honors students may request an exception to take one graduate course for the equivalent number of General Honors credits. Only one graduate-only course may be counted for Honors credit and for at most 6 total hours. Please see the policy on



Undergraduate Students in Graduate Courses in the Undergraduate Catalog for enrollment information. The Honors College Exception Request form for requesting such a substitution is on the Honors College website. This form must be submitted to the Honors College for approval *before* the graduate class begins.

### ***DEPARTMENTAL HONORS***

Departmental Honors is a designation not controlled by the Honors College but by individual departments (e.g., Sociology and Anthropology). Opportunities for participating in a particular departmental honors program are within the purview of the sponsoring department.

Departmental honors programs are distinct from the Honors Curriculum, but up to 6 departmental honors hours may be applied toward General Honors credits in the Honors College. The Honors College Exception Request form for requesting such a substitution is on the Honors College website. This form must be submitted to the Honors College for approval *before* Departmental Honors are pursued.

### **ADVISING, RETENTION and PROGRESS**

In their first semester at Marshall, students are required to participate in an individual First-Year Check-In advising appointment with an Honors College advisor. This meeting qualifies students for Priority Registration. Failure to attend a First-Year Check-In will result in dismissal from the Honors College and forfeiture of any future Honors College benefits.

Ongoing Honors Advising for all students is offered in the College each semester. It is during these meetings that students arrange to enroll in sections of the Honors Seminar (HON 480) as well as experiential and collaborative learning course such as the Honors Peer Mentors and Leaders (HON 300), Honors Oracle newsletter (HON 484), the Steering Committee of the Honors College Student Association (HON 488), and the TEDxMarshallU Internship (HON 490). The College will notify students by university email of the advising dates and the process for scheduling appointments.

In some circumstances, students will be required to attend an advising meeting on an ad hoc basis. These students will be notified by university email.

Because seats in HON 300 and Special Topics HON courses are limited, students who withdraw from two seminars after the add/drop period has ended may enroll in a subsequent HON 300, HON 480 or HON 481 course only with permission of the Dean. A student initiates a request with the Enrollment Petition form located on the Honors College website.

**Students must earn a C or better in a course to receive Honors credit.**

## ACADEMIC STANDING IN THE HONORS COLLEGE

To remain in good academic standing in the Honors College, a student must:

- be enrolled in a bachelor's degree program at Marshall University
- maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.30 or higher (with the exception of their first semester at Marshall, as seen below)
- complete 6 honors credits within the first 2 semesters in the Honors College
- register for HON 200 in the Spring of their second year at Marshall

Students who fail to meet these standards may be dismissed from the Honors College and forfeit any future Honors College benefits. Exceptions to any of these standards must be approved by the Dean upon a student's submission of the Honors College Exception Request form.

First-year students who achieve an overall GPA between 2.70 and 2.99 in their first semester will automatically be placed on Honors Academic Probation for up to two semesters. This policy aims to provide students with the opportunity to access support services to improve their academic performance. The goal is for students on probation to achieve an overall GPA of at least 3.30 by the end of their probationary period.

A student whose overall GPA falls below 3.30, *after* their first semester, will be placed on Academic Probation in the Honors College. If the overall GPA is 3.30 or above at the end of the probation semester, the student will return to Good Standing in the Honors College. If the overall GPA is not 3.30 or higher at the end of the probation semester, the student will be dismissed from the college and forfeit any future Honors College benefits.

Students on Academic Probation in the Honors College must meet with the Honors Advisor to discuss plans for returning to Good Standing in the College. Failure to do so within the specified time will result in loss of Priority Registration privileges.

Honors College students on probation who do not register for classes for the following term will be dismissed from the Honors College. If such students return to Marshall and desire to return to the Honors College, they must complete the Appeal for Reinstatement form found on the Honors College website. The Dean makes all decisions about reinstatement, and these are final.

The Honors Advisor will review all honors students' academic records after grades are posted each semester. Students on probation and students who are being dismissed from the Honors College will be notified about their status by university e-mail after the records review is complete.

A student who is dismissed from the Honors College may appeal the dismissal. The appeals process begins with a letter to the Dean of the Honors College outlining the basis for

requesting reinstatement. Decisions regarding reinstatement will be made at the Dean's discretion and are final.

### **HONORS STUDENTS IN 3+ PROGRAMS**

Honors College students participating in 3+ programs must file an Honors Plan of Study for Students in 3+ programs form with the Honors Advisor by the first semester in which the student enrolls in graduate hours. This form is available on the Honors College website.

### **GRADUATION**

Students satisfying all honors requirements receive recognition on their transcripts. To receive this recognition, students must apply for graduation from the Honors College early in the semester in which they intend to graduate. Information for applying will be e-mailed from the Honors Advisor and posted on the Honors College website.