



**University of Nevada, Reno**

**Honors Student Handbook  
2009-2010 Edition**



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# **Honors Student Handbook**

## **2009-2010 Edition**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Honors Program at the University of Nevada, Reno!

This handbook is designed to provide you with an overview of the Honors Program at the University of Nevada, Reno, and its many benefits and rewards. It explains what is expected of students and how students can take advantage of the opportunities the Honors Program offers. In general, this handbook attempts to answer questions about the Honors experience at the University of Nevada, Reno. If, after reading this handbook, you still have questions, please feel free to contact or visit the Honors Program Office in the Jot Travis Building, Room 11, (775) 784-1455. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

### **II. MISSION AND VISION**

#### **Mission Statement**

In order to prepare leaders who effectively engage our complex and rapidly changing world, a university education must go beyond the provision of a strong fund of professional knowledge and skill. It is the mission of the Honors Program at the University of Nevada, Reno to provide strong support for the development of students' capacities to think deeply and critically and to act in ways that promote the betterment of all citizens.

#### **Vision Statement**

The Honors Program at the University of Nevada, Reno seeks to provide students who are both academically talented and highly motivated with an undergraduate education that nurtures and promotes students' capacities to think competently, understand deeply, and act ethically.

### **III. ABOUT THE HONORS PROGRAM**

The current Honors Program began in 1989 and now enrolls almost 500 Honors students. It is rated as one of the nation's best in "Ivy League Programs at State School Prices: The 55 Best Honors Programs at State Universities Nationwide."

The Honors Program is committed to providing strong support for the development of these qualities among a select group of students who have demonstrated exceptional promise. The Honors Program is university-wide and compatible with all academic majors. Successful participation in the Honors Program gives highly qualified students the ability to become skilled in their specific disciplines and the personal satisfaction of having met and accomplished an innovative and challenging university program.

In accomplishing the challenges of and succeeding in the Honors Program, students have opportunities to

- Enroll in small, interactive Honors classes taught by outstanding professors
- Develop mentoring relationships with faculty
- Attend Honors academic and social functions
- Participate in programs for national and international study
- Take part in scholarly and professional development activities
- Graduate with Latin distinctions

The Honors Program offers students a rewarding curriculum of study. Honors classes are available in the University's core curriculum, in the student's major, as electives and through international travel. The Honors Program offers a wide choice of courses, and students have latitude in choosing courses to fulfill Honors credit. All Honors students must complete the Honors Senior Thesis/Project, an independent, original scholarly or creative topic of interest to the student in the major; the thesis/project is directed by a faculty mentor for two semesters. Students are required to orally defend their theses/projects. In addition, students may earn Honors points by participating in service oriented activities that provide enriching experiences. The Honors Program is designed to be completed without extending your planned program of study.

A unique feature of the Honors Program is the **Honors Residential Scholars Community** available to Honors students who choose to live on campus. Students enroll in a common core of Honors classes, participate in scheduled interactive activities with faculty outside of the classroom, and take part in programs designed to enhance academic and personal success.

#### **IV. PROGRAM QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Admission to the Honors Program is selective and competitive. Since the Honors Program can take only the best-qualified applicants, evidence of academic strength is required. Incoming first-year students, continuing University of Nevada, Reno students, and transfer students are eligible for admittance to the Honors Program upon review and approval of the Honors Admissions Committee. While transfer or continuing students may apply to the program with junior or senior standing, completion of the 30 Honors credits necessary to graduate with an Honors degree may be difficult. Qualified students are encouraged to apply at any time during their undergraduate studies.

Requirements and application materials are available through the Honors Program website. Applications are submitted electronically; teacher recommendations are accepted electronically. The deadlines for applications are February 1 (for fall semester) and November 1 (for spring semester) each year. Applicants are notified of acceptance by the end of April and by mid-January, respectively.

## V. BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

**Honors Curriculum** – Taught by distinguished faculty and tailored for Honors students, Honors classes are available in the University’s core curriculum, in the student’s major, and as electives. Students have a wide choice of courses to fulfill Honors credit every semester.

**Dynamic Instruction** – The most highly regarded faculty on campus teach in the Honors Program. The general characteristics of Honors classes include cooperative instructional styles, intellectual dialogue, cutting-edge, discipline-based knowledge, experimental learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovative teaching techniques.

**Honors Faculty** – Distinguished faculty – many of whom are recipients of prestigious teaching and research awards – teach Honors classes, mentor Honors students, and supervise Honors senior theses. Enthusiastic and ready to challenge, Honors faculty engage students in open dialogue and guide them in independent research. These instructors offer opportunities for students to broaden and deepen their experiences in the students’ major fields, more individual attention on an academic level, more personal coaching about graduate study and career options, and outstanding letters of recommendation.

**Small, Supportive, Interactive Classes** – Enrollment in Honors classes is generally limited to a maximum of 18 Honors students in English 102 to 35 Honors students in Core Humanities 201, 202, 203. Small classes and the best professors lead to lively discussions and interaction among Honors students and faculty. Because classes are small, students study the subject matter more extensively and in greater depth than in regular classes.

**Honors Residential Scholars Living Learning Communities** – Specifically designed residential learning communities are available to a limited number of Honors Program students who live in designated residence halls and pursue the same curriculum of studies. Participation is based on application and approval by the Honors Program and Residential Life.

**Alternative Learning Opportunities** – Honors students are encouraged to participate in a variety of alternative learning opportunities throughout their college careers. Student retreats, *The Great Presentation* faculty seminar series, service learning activities, and other social and educational activities planned each semester.

**Peer Support Network** – Because Honors students take classes together, engage in social functions together, and participate in alternative learning experiences together, Honors students have the frequent opportunity to meet other Honors students from various majors, students who are similarly interested in high academic achievement, and students who are motivated toward professional career choices. Honors students are invited to help coordinate activities, recruit potential students and work on committees to meet the needs of the Honors students at the university.

**Honors Ambassadors** - Honors Student Ambassadors are selected Honors students who promote a positive perspective of college life to prospective Honors students and their families. Ambassadors share information, answer questions, and help prospective students to make an informed decision when making their college choice. Ambassadors help to develop and participate in programming for current students in the Honors Program

**University Support Network** – The Honors Program is university-wide and compatible with all academic majors.

- *University Libraries* (Knowledge Center) offer library services to support Honors students including 16-week borrowing privileges, special workshops for Honors seniors working on their theses, library partners who serve as subject specialists to Honors students, and specialized library classes.
- *Office of Undergraduate Research* (Ross Hall) offers Honors Undergraduate Research Awards (HURA) to Honors seniors working on their theses. Honors students are encouraged to apply for the Honors Undergraduate Research Award each fall.
- *Instructional Design in Teaching and Learning* (Knowledge Center) offers Honors students the opportunity to undertake internships for academic credit through the Honors Program.
- *University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC)* (Old Gym, Room 100) offers study opportunities to travel internationally for Honors credit.
- *Office of Undergraduate Fellowships* (Honors Program, Jot Travis, Room 11) provides advice and assistance to undergraduates interested in applying for external fellowships such as the Fulbright, Gates Cambridge, Goldwater, Madison, Marshall, Mitchell, Rhodes, Truman, and Udall.

**Honors Orientation** – Incoming Honors students are invited to participate in the First-Year Honors Student Weekend Retreat at Lake Tahoe prior to the beginning of fall classes. Formal program orientations are held in August and January to inform all Honors students of the rights, responsibilities and privileges associated with the program.

**Honors Advisement** – Honors advising is available on an on-going basis for Honors students. Students who participate in advisement each semester are cleared for priority registration. The Honors Program requires that each Honors student meet with an Honors advisor at least once a year. Students who are not advised at their mandatory annual meeting will be restricted from registering for classes until the Honors advising requirement has been fulfilled.

**Honors Recognition** – Honors students will have their membership acknowledged in print on their university identification card. This will serve to facilitate library privileges and access to Honors specific resources.

**Priority Registration** – As members of the Honors Program, Honors students have the opportunity to register for classes at an earlier time than other graduate and undergraduate students each semester. Honors students who participate in Honors advisement are cleared to register with priority for the coming semester. This benefit offers Honors students the widest selection of courses and scheduling options.

**International Study for Honors Credit** – The Honors Program considers international study an enriching academic and personal experience. When students register for classes through the USAC program or register for classes at a university in another country, they are encouraged to pursue opportunities for Honors credit. An Honors advisor can explain the steps required to earn Honors credit while abroad.

**Special Recognition at Graduation** – All students graduating in the Honors Program receive special recognition for achieving Honors at graduation.

- Eligibility to graduate with Latin distinctions
- Diplomas scripted *in cursu honorum*
- Honors convocation ceremony
- Individual listings in the University commencement program
- Honors coursework identified as Honors on transcripts
- Honors designation on University transcripts
- *Excellence in Honors Award* recognizing two outstanding Honors seniors

**Student Academic and Professional Opportunities** – There are many opportunities for Honors students to become involved in scholarly and professional activities. Applying for a national fellowship, becoming a member of an Honors society, or presenting a paper at a national conference are achievements noted on résumés and accomplishments valued by employers.

- **National Grants, Fellowships, Scholarships and Awards** – National fellowships such as Fulbright, Gates Cambridge, Goldwater, Madison, Marshall, Mitchell, Rhodes, Truman, and Udall are highly competitive and prestigious awards that require extensive preparation in the application process. Awards vary widely by eligibility requirements, financial award amounts, and fields of study and career objectives, language requirements, and deadlines. Any student who wishes to apply for a grant, fellowship or award should plan to attend one of the regularly scheduled fellowship workshops offered through the Honors Program or contact the Office of Undergraduate Fellowships in the Honors Program office for an appointment with the Fellowships Program Advisor. A description of individual fellowships and eligibility requirements are available on the Office of Undergraduate Fellowship website (<http://www.unr.edu/honors/ouf/>).
- **Honors Societies** – The University of Nevada, Reno is a chapter member of Phi Kappa Phi and Golden Key, among other national honors societies committed to academic excellence. When students apply for membership, they are eligible for fellowships and scholarships through the award programs of these Honors societies. Complete descriptions of these Honors societies are available on the Honors Program website.
- **Honors Conferences** – The Honors Program at the University of Nevada, Reno is a member of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), the Western Regional Honors Council (WRHC) and the National Association of Faculty Advisors (NAFA). Honors students are encouraged to attend and participate in these national and regional Honors organizations. Among other opportunities, these professional societies and organizations offer students occasions to travel, make academic presentations, win national recognition, meet Honors students from across the nation, and acquire leadership skills. Students are encouraged to present papers, original research, musical performances or any other original work at both the National Collegiate Honors Conference and the Western Regional Honors Conference. The NCHC meets in the fall;

the WRHC meets in the spring. Scholarships to participate in these conferences are available to eligible Honors students. Further information is available at the Honors Program Office.

**Note:** Erin Edgington, class of 2008, won the 2008 NCHC Portz Scholars award for her Honors thesis on French literature.

- **Honors Alum Chapter** – The Honors Program has graduated 600 graduates over the past 17 years. Established in 2006, the Honors Alum Chapter offers current Honors students opportunities to network with past Honors students, participate in alum social events such as Pack Picnic on the Quad, and participate in the alum mentoring program.
- **The Honors Edge** – Because the Honors Program attracts better students to the University, it also attracts better opportunities for graduate school, professional school, employment, and national scholarships and fellowships. Graduate schools, professional schools, employers, and screening committees view students in Honors Program more favorably and see this involvement as an advantage.

## VI. CONTINUATION IN THE HONORS PROGRAM

Honors students should be actively pursuing their degrees, taking classes and earning credits. As members of the Honors Program, students must earn Honors credits on a regular basis. Acceptable progress is considered at least 6 Honors credits per academic year. Failure to proceed at this rate may jeopardize a student's standing in the program.

### Satisfactory Progress

The Honors Program offers a range of opportunities for students to earn Honors credit each semester:

- Honors classes designated as HON
- Honors sections of core curriculum courses and elective courses
- Honors contract courses in the major for 300 and 400 level courses
- Senior Honors thesis and advanced research projects
- Honors internships
- International study
- Honors points in non-traditional learning environments

**Coursework** - In order to graduate with an Honors degree, students must complete a minimum of 30 credits of Honors-level coursework. Reasonable progress is considered to be the completion of at least 6 Honors credits each year. In order to retain the privileges of membership in the Honors Program, students must maintain this minimum progress. However, students can and should complete Honors credits at a faster pace.

**Note:** In order to reach the required 30 Honors credits and graduate with an Honors degree, Honors students must complete more than the minimum 6 Honors credits per academic year. In order to receive Honors credit, the student must complete the Honors course requirement and earn a final course grade of B- or better.

**Note:** The record number of Honors credits earned by an individual Honors student was Justin Jo, class of 2009, who earned 45 Honors credits as an undergraduate.

**Course Descriptions** - Students register for classes on ePaws. Course descriptions of Honors offerings are available on the UNR Honors Program website. The call numbers for Honors classes are identified only on the *Honors Course Listing* sheet available in the Honors Program office each semester. Regular Honors course offerings include

- **Honors English 102 (3)** - Incoming Honors students are exempt from taking English 101 and are eligible to register for Honors English 102 in the fall semester. The Honors Program strongly recommends that all Honors students register for Honors English 102 whether or not they are granted AP credit in English.
- **HON 200 - 1<sup>st</sup> Year Honors Seminar (3)** - Incoming Honors students living in the Honors Residential Scholars Community are required to take HON 200B, Honors seminar. This course introduces new students to the culture of Honors on the university campus. It addresses academic issues as well as skills for social and personal development. This class is open to all Honors students.
- **HON 220 - Introduction to Economic Theory and Policy (3)** - Equivalent to ECON 102 (Microeconomics) and ECON 103 (Macroeconomics).
- **HON 235 – Research in the Information Age (1)** – Required of all Honors students, this S/U, online course prepares Honors students for thesis research. Sophomore or Junior status.
- **HON 492 – Advanced Honors Research (up to 3)** – Provides an opportunity for Honors students to conduct additional research or complete two Honors theses. Students can develop an independent, original scholarly or creative topic of interest not necessarily in their majors.
- **HON 495 – Honors Program Internship (up to 3)** – A faculty supervised internship to enhance students' skills and knowledge with an on-campus project.
- **Honors core curriculum courses offered on a rotating basis** - Math: MATH 181, 182; Science: Bio 125; BIO 190, 191; CHEM 201, 202; GEOL 100, PHYS 180, 181; Social Sciences: HON 220, PSY 101, PSC 211, 231, 305; Fine Arts: ART 100; DAN 266; MUS 122.
- **Honors sections of CH 201, CH 202, CH 203** - The Honors Program offers the sequence of Core Humanities (CH) courses as Honors credits every semester. English 102 must be completed before beginning the CH sequence.

**Grade Point Average** - In order to remain in the Honors program, Honors students must maintain a cumulative 3.25 grade point average in any semester.

**Probation** - If an Honors student's cumulative GPA falls below the required cumulative GPA 3.25, the student is placed on a one-semester probationary period in which he or she will be required to attend additional Honors advising sessions for academic guidance. During the probationary semester, the student continues to enjoy all Honors Program privileges, including priority registration. At the end of the probationary semester, with a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher the student returns to regular Honors status. A student with a cumulative GPA lower than 3.25 is dismissed from the Honors Program. At this time, the dismissed student will need to

withdraw from all Honors classes. Dismissed students who later return to academic good standing may reapply to the program in future semesters.

In an effort to comply with the academic standards set forth by the University of Nevada, Reno, the Honors Program will comply with any academic sanctions taken by the university.

**Mandatory Advisement** – All Honors students must participate in Honors advisement at least once each academic year, but are encouraged to meet every semester. First-year students (0 – 30 credits) and seniors (90+ credits) should arrange appointments with their Honors advisors in the fall semester; sophomores (30 – 59 credits) and juniors (60 – 89 credits) should arrange appointments in the spring semester. Only after an Honors student is advised in the Honors Program, will the student be cleared for priority registration.

The Honors advising process is designed to advise students on their academic progress in Honors. Students should be aware of their responsibilities as an advisee.

- Students should contact and regularly keep in touch with the Honors Program.
- Students should make appointments in advance and keep appointments or call to change or cancel appointments.
- Students should come to appointments prepared and with specific questions in mind.
- Students should have met or scheduled an appointment with major advisors.
- Students should be equipped with a current DARS report, writing utensils, and tentative class schedule.
- Students should ask about other information related to the Honors Program, e.g., national scholarships, scheduled events, and service opportunities.
- Prior to the appointments, students should prepare a preliminary schedule of classes that works toward completing the Honors Program with 30 Honors credits.
- Students should have a positive attitude and leave the advising session empowered to make progress toward fulfilling Honors Program requirements.

**Termination and Readmission** – An Honors student may be terminated from membership of the Honors Program when

- A student meets with the Director or Assistant Director to complete and submit a ***Request to Withdraw From the Honors Program*** form available online
- A student fails to fully participate in the Honors Program or fails to complete at least six Honors credit hours per academic year
- A student remains below a cumulative GPA of 3.25 in a probationary semester
- A student is found by the university to have committed or participated in an incident of academic dishonesty

Any student terminated from the Honors Program may apply for readmission. A student who has been terminated from the Honors Program may submit a formal petition in the form of a letter requesting reinstatement. The typed letter must be submitted to the Director of the Honors Program explaining the circumstances of termination and reasons for reinstatement. After considering the circumstances and the student's academic history, the Director determines whether the student is reinstated.

**Leave of Absence** - If an Honors student plans *not* to register for classes at the University of Nevada, Reno in a given semester, it is important that the student file a ***Leave of Absence*** form available online. Prior to studying internationally, a student must complete this form. If a student chooses to earn Honors credit, the **HON 410 Area Study** form is available online.

## **Earning Honors Credit**

Students complete the required 30-Honors credits through a combination of enrolling in Honors courses, by contracting Honors courses in the major or by earning up to six Honors points. In other words, the 30 credits can be earned by taking 24 hours of Honors course credits and by completing a maximum of 6 Honors points.

**Note:** Honors points are offered by the Honors Program and do not meet academic requirements for graduation.

**Honors Courses** - Each semester, Honors courses are offered specifically for Honors Program members. Taught by outstanding teaching faculty, these courses are distinguished by their distinctive approach to teaching and learning of the subject matter. Honors courses usually emphasize participatory classroom styles, intense and in-depth study of subject matter, the use of primary source material, team or group teaching, an interdisciplinary theme, and an element of independent study. Honors courses include intensive reading, writing, and research.

Honors courses may be Honors sections of core curriculum courses, or courses that are used to meet elective requirements. Some courses are designated HON in the Course Schedule (e.g. HON 490, section 001, Honors Thesis I). Other courses are indicated in the Course Schedule by department with the designation "H" as part of the section number (e.g. ENG 102, section H01). A complete listing of Honors courses and descriptions is available on the Honors Program Website under Curriculum. Only Honors students may enroll in Honors courses. To register on ePaws for an Honors class, students must obtain the call numbers from the Honors Program office.

**Honors in the Major** - The Honors Program welcomes proposals from Honors students who elect to earn Honors credit by enrolling in a non-Honors, upper division course in their major. **Course contracts are available only for 300 and 400 level courses in the major.** Honors in the Major gives students an opportunity to broaden and deepen their experience in their major fields. Honors in the Major implies a qualitative enhancement of the course, not necessarily a quantitative enhancement. Students who undertake Honors in the Major must demonstrate additional knowledge and skills beyond the content and requirements of the regular class.

An Honors student contracts a course by contacting a faculty member in the student's major and asking the faculty member to allow the student to take a scheduled non-Honors course for Honors credit. With the assistance of the instructor, the student completes the *Honors in the Major* form available online. The type of academic activity described in the Honors contract must go beyond the normal course content and requirements. Work may include additional readings or assignments, written projects not expected of other students in the course, guided independent study or individual research, class presentations, additional student-faculty

discussions, co-teaching, or any acceptable project that examines the course material in more depth than the regular class. The Honors contract requires the submission of the course syllabus, a detailed description of the project and a timetable for the completion of the academic project. The Honors in the Major must be reviewed, approved, and signed by the Director of the Honors Program.

The deadline for filing the contract with the Honors Program Office is the first day of class on or after October 1 for the fall semester, and the first day of class on or after March 1 for the spring semester. The student must complete the Honors component of the course with an overall course grade of B- or better in order to receive Honors credit for the course.

During the last weeks of the semester in which a course has been contracted, the Honors Program office will return a copy of the contract to the instructor for confirmation that the project was completed by the student. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the instructor returns the signed form to the Honors Program office. Without this form, no changes will be made to the student's transcripts.

**Honors Points** - Each semester, in addition to Honors courses, the Honors Program offers many opportunities for Honors students to earn Honors credits. Termed "Honors Point" activities, these non-traditional units are earned for significant, recognized activities that provide enrichment for general non-classroom education. Honors points must be approved by the Honors Program prior to undertaking the activity. No Honors Points will be awarded retroactively. Points are not rewarded for paid activities or class requirements. There is a minimum time commitment of three weeks for Honors points activities. The deadline for filing the contract with the Honors Program Office is the first day of class on or after October 1 for the fall semester, and the first day of class on or after March 1 for the spring semester. There are two options for earning Honors Points.

- **Service Learning:** Service learning is a combination of service with learning beyond the classroom. Honors students use their abilities and talents to demonstrate a commitment to an ethic of civic responsibility by engaging in an activity that benefits both the student and the community. (One point for each 30-40 hours of service.) Students are awarded service Honors points for the following activities.
  - Mentoring: Honors students offer support and guidance to another individual or group by sharing their knowledge or experience in an academic area. Examples: Honors-Wolf Pack Tutoring Initiative, MESA (Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement), Hug High School Mentoring Program
  - Volunteerism: Honors students engage in meaningful, reciprocal *action* in their university or local communities. Examples: Volunteering at Big Brother/Big Sisters, Renown Medical Center, or Habitat for Humanity; coaching middle school girls' soccer; participating in the Honors Ambassadors Program
- **Scholarly activities and academic programming:** Honors students engage in research or organize Honors programming, then share what they have learned with others. Examples: presentation of papers at academic meetings; participation in Honors regional

or national meetings; submission of an application for an approved national fellowship (Fulbright, Rhodes, etc.); development of academic programs (e.g., Leadership series). Students can earn one point for each activity

To earn Honors Points, an Honors student must submit a 2-3 page self-reflection essay by January 1 (for the fall semester) or June 1 (for the spring semester). Essays will not be accepted after these dates.

A passing essay is one that is fully developed, exhibits significant thought into the analysis, and contains no grammatical or typing errors. The paper should demonstrate 1) familiarity with the content of the material/event, 2) a critical analysis of the material, 3) the application of a personal perspective, and 4) relevant insights. A failing essay is one that lacks analysis and depth. Additional criteria are listed on the Honors Point form, which can be found on the Honors Program website under Documents and Forms.

**Note:** A maximum of 6 Honors points may be awarded to any Honors student. No points are awarded for activities required for credit in other classes nor are points awarded for activities where students are compensated.

- **International Study** – The Honors Program considers international study an enriching academic and personal experience. A variety of opportunities are available for Honors students interested in studying internationally. The University of Nevada, Reno belongs to the University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC), a university cooperative that currently includes 31 programs in 21 countries. International study opportunities are available in a variety of subjects with many courses taught by faculty from universities in the United States. In addition, the National Collegiate Honors Council offers study abroad opportunities annually. In order to receive Honors credit for international study, students must complete the *Honors 410 Area Study* form available online prior to travel. Students enroll in HON 410 the semester following travel.

**Note:** HON 410 students are also required to complete the Leave of Absence form prior to leaving the country.

## VII. GRADUATING IN THE HONORS PROGRAM

### A. COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

To complete the Honors Program, an Honors student must earn a University of Nevada, Reno undergraduate degree, satisfy all major and Honors Program requirements, and remain in good standing throughout the student's college career. An Honors student must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.25 each semester and achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.25 at the time of graduation; complete a minimum of 6 Honors credits each year; demonstrate significant contributions to Honors academic and social activities; meet with an Honors advisor once a year; complete a minimum of 30 credits of Honors coursework; and complete an Honors Thesis/Project and an oral defense.

**Graduating with Honors** - Graduating with Honors requires the successful completion of all Honors Program requirements.

- **Completion of a Minimum of 30 Credits in Honors** - As outlined above, students must complete a minimum of 30 credits of coursework throughout the college career. Prior to completing the thesis/project, in the student's sophomore or junior year, every Honors student must complete HON 235 – Research in the Information Age. This one-credit, S/U, online course prepares Honors students for thesis research. To receive Honors credit for a course, an Honors student must complete each Honors class with a grade of B- or higher. Up to six Honors points may replace Honors course credits.
- **Completion of a Senior Honors Thesis/Project and Oral Defense** – All Honors students must complete a thesis/project in their major during their junior or senior year. The Honors Thesis/Project is the development of an independent, original scholarly or creative topic of interest to the student in the major. It is completed in the student's major field and represents the culminating experience of an undergraduate education. The thesis/project is not expected to be graduate-level work, but superior undergraduate performance is expected; the thesis/project demonstrates greater depth and a more thorough understanding of a specific, focused topic in the major field. The thesis/project is directed by a faculty member who agrees to work with the Honors student for two semesters or six semester hours of credit. Once the thesis/project is completed and the manuscript is written, the student orally defends his/her thesis.
- **Application to Graduate in the Honors Program** - If an Honors student has completed the requirements of the Honors Program and plans to graduate in the Honors Program within the next year, the student should complete the *Application to Graduate in the Honors Program* form online. If the student plans to graduate in December, he/she submits this form by September 15; if the student plans to graduate in May, he/she submits this form by February 15.

### **The Senior Honors Thesis/Project**

**Different Types of Theses** – Typically a senior Honors thesis ranges from 30-100 pages depending on the discipline: *Experimentation-based* is completed in collaboration with a faculty member on an existing research project (25-40 pages); *Humanities and Social Sciences* is an in-depth argument supported with relevant scholarship and the student's own insight (40-60 pages); *Creative* pieces are approximately 100 pages; *Visual Arts and Performing Arts* vary in length but the written thesis should contextualize the creative work within the field and offer critical insights into the student's creative process.

**Early Preparation for the Senior Honors Thesis/Project** – As early as the sophomore year, Honors students should be thinking about completing their senior theses or projects. To prepare sophomores and juniors for the research experience, all Honors students are required to complete HON 235 – Research in the Information Age - to acquaint themselves with the research process.

In the junior year, an Honors student selects a faculty mentor or advisor who is willing to work with the student for two consecutive semesters on a topic related to the student's major area of study.

The Office of Undergraduate Research accepts applications from Honors students in any discipline to fund student academic research or creative studies under the direction of a faculty mentor. While the Honors Undergraduate Research Award (HURA) is always due in the fall, other award deadlines vary. Visit the website for the Office of Under-graduate Research for more information: <http://www.unr.edu/undergraduateresearch/symposium.html>

**Registering for the Senior Honors Thesis/Project** - To be eligible for registration in the Senior Honors Thesis/Project the student must be a member of the Honors Program and have completed all other core curriculum requirements, including the Core Humanities sequence. The Honors Program recommends that the student should have at least 21 hours of Honors credit before enrolling in HON 490 or in the Senior Capstone in the major. The Honors Thesis courses must be taken in consecutive semesters. If a department requires a senior capstone project, with approval the student can elect either the major's option or the Honors Thesis/Project.

**Option 1: Required Senior Capstone in the Major.** Students in majors that require a senior thesis/project are not required to do a separate Honors Thesis/Project.

Honors Program approved Senior Thesis or Project in the major: ATMS 497; BCH 407, 408; BIO 496, 497; BIOT 447; CEE 427 and a second capstone; CEE 456, 457; CHE 450, 482; CHEM 495, 496; CS 425, 426; EE 490, 491; GEO 497, 498; GE 483, GE 487; MECH 451, 452; MINE 413, 418; MSE 450, 482; PHYS 497

Students must register for a minimum of 6 credits and the maximum allowed credits for the classes in that major. If a major offers only 3 credits of senior thesis, the student can complete the additional 3 credits in HON 491.

Honors students are advised to complete the Honors Senior Thesis/Project in the Major form each semester they are registered for the senior thesis in their major.

It is critical that upon completion of the thesis by the end of the semester prior to graduation, the student submit a **bound copy** of the final thesis/project to the Honors Program. Students should consult the Honors Program Library of Senior Theses and the *Honors Program Senior Thesis Handbook for further guidance*.

**Option 2: Honors Thesis/Project through the Honors Program.** If the major does not offer the student the option to complete a thesis, the student must complete a thesis by registering for HON 490: Honors Thesis I and 491: Honors Thesis II in consecutive semesters. HON 491 fulfills the university Major Capstone requirement. Students should consult the Honors Program Library of Senior Theses and the *Honors Program Senior Thesis Handbook for further guidance*.

## **HON 490 - Honors Thesis I**

**Selecting a Faculty Mentor** - In the junior year, before entering HON 490, the student selects a faculty mentor in his/her major field. The faculty mentor should be a full-time ranked member of the University who is willing to direct the student over two semesters. In consultation with the faculty mentor, the student discusses the topic or project and completes the *Honors Senior Thesis Agreement* available online and due within one week of the first class.

**Registering for Honors Thesis Credit** - The Honors student must register and complete HON 490 before registering for HON 491. **HON 490 and HON 491 MUST be taken in consecutive semesters.**

**Attending Regularly Scheduled Meetings with the Director or Assistant Director of the Honors Program** – Throughout the semester, the student meets with the Director or Assistant Director of the Honors Program to initiate the Honors thesis/project and discuss the project. The dates of class meeting are scheduled 4-5 times a semester.

**Library Privileges** – Honor students can receive individual or group help on the thesis/project by making an appointment with a library specialist for a particular department. The Knowledge Center offers library services to support Honors students including 16-week borrowing privileges, special workshops for Honors seniors working on their theses, and library partners who serve as subject specialists to Honors students.

**Writing the Proposal** - A proposal of the project is a written description of the topic/project in 3-5 pages. It clearly describes the project, addresses the questions asked, identifies the methodology/approach taken, and provides a timetable for completion of the thesis/project. Signed by the student and the faculty mentor, the proposal is submitted; then the proposal is filed in the Honors Program Office by early October in the fall semester or by mid-February in the spring semester. These deadlines are established with the intent of ensuring that every student will meet the deadlines established by the Honors Undergraduate Research Award. Within a week of receiving the proposal, the Director of the Honors Program approves the proposal; the original is retained on file in the Honors Program Office. Issues such as approval of the Human Subjects Committee, if required, must be addressed in the proposal.

**Writing the Prospectus** - The prospectus is a more advanced, detailed statement of the thesis/project. It restates the goals of the thesis/project and indicates how these goals have been refined in the light of additional work on the topic. A persuasive document, it convinces the audience that there is a need for this research. The prospectus includes an *abstract, introduction, literature review, methodology, anticipated results, outline, timeline, and reference*. The prospectus ranges between 5-10 pages double-spaced. The prospectus, signed by the student and mentor, is due in the Honors Program Office by early December for the fall semester or by mid-April for the spring semester.

**Evaluation** - A letter grade for HON 490 is given at the end of the semester. In order to graduate with the Latin designation magna cum laude or summa cum laude, the student must receive a

grade of A in HON 490. If the Human Subjects Committee Approval is needed, then it must be received by this time.

## **HON 491 - Honors Thesis II**

**Registering for Honors Thesis Credit** - The Honors student must register and complete HON 490 before registering for HON 491. **HON 490 and HON 491 MUST be taken in consecutive semesters.**

**Attending Regularly Scheduled Meetings with the Director or Assistant Director of the Honors Program** – Throughout the semester, the student meets with the Director or Assistant Director of the Honors Program to discuss the progress of the Honors thesis/project, preparation for the Oral Defense, and submission of the final product. The dates of class meeting are scheduled 4-5 times a semester.

**Submitting a Progress Report** - The progress report is a written report describing the progress that the student has made toward the completion of the thesis/project. Addressing each point of the prospectus, the student explains what has been accomplished and what needs to be done in order to complete the thesis by the end of the semester. The prospectus must be signed by the student and the faculty mentor, indicating that the thesis/project is in its final stage, and then submitted to the Honors Program Office by mid-September for the fall semester or by mid-February for the spring semester. The Progress Report contains a final timetable indicating that the written thesis/project will be submitted to the Honors Program Office by mid-November for the fall semester or by mid-April for the spring semester, and an Oral Defense will be scheduled within three weeks of the submission of the written thesis/project.

**Preparing for the Oral Defense** - At the oral defense, the student presents a summary of the project/thesis and defends the major points of the thesis/project in front of an audience including the faculty mentor, the Honors thesis committee, and other invited guests. The student is allotted two hours to discuss or "defend" the thesis/project. The student arranges the time and place of the oral defense. The oral defense must be scheduled within three weeks of the submission of the written thesis/project.

**Submitting the Final, Bound Honors Thesis/Project** - The deadline for submitting the completed final, **bound** thesis or project is **one week after the Oral Defense**. The bound Honors Thesis/Project should have the appearance of a dissertation or Master's thesis according to the University Graduate School Guidelines. The manuscript must be free of typographical, mechanical, and stylistic errors. The paper should follow the conventional formatting style as that of the field of study. MLA and APA are the preferred documentation styles. Students must submit a PDF of their theses also. The bound copy of each Honors student's thesis/project is housed in the Honors Program Library in the Jot Travis Building.

**Evaluation** - A letter grade for HON 491 is submitted at the end of the semester. In order to graduate **magna cum laude** (3.7 to 3.89 cumulative) or **summa cum laude** (3.9 or higher cumulative), the student must receive an A in HON 490 and 491 or a cumulative grade of A on the final Senior Honors Thesis if not taking HON 490 and 491.

## B. EXIT INTERVIEW

Honors students are advised to make an appointment with the Honors Program Office within the first two weeks of the semester in which they expect to graduate in order to discuss the student's DARS report and to verify Honors requirements. At least two months prior to the graduation date, each student is invited to make another appointment with the Honors Program for an exit interview. During this time, the student will submit a completed *Honors Program Exit Survey* (available online) evaluating his/her Honors experience, review transcripts, and re-verify Honors requirements. The Honors Program is always interested in students' academic achievements and awards. The Honors Program requests that students bring copies of any scholarships, travel activities, leadership roles or positions, or other significant accomplishments or awards in order for the Honors Program to recognize its graduates and publicize outstanding student achievements.

## C. RECOGNITION AT GRADUATION

The Honors Program is proud of its graduates. Students who graduate in the Honors Program are recognized for their Honors learning experiences.

- **Latin Designation** - Students who complete the requirements of the Honors Program and fulfill all university, college and major requirements with the specified GPA both in the major program and overall, based upon at least 96 credits in courses graded "A" through "F," qualify for a Latin designation. At least 64 semester credits must be earned in residence at the university in courses graded "A" through "F." Transfer students must satisfy the university requirements and have a combined transfer-university GPA that satisfies the minimum, specified total.
  - ***Summa Cum Laude*** - meaning "with the highest praise" is the highest distinction awarded at graduation. To graduate *summa cum laude*, a student must achieve a 3.9 or higher cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale with a cumulative grade of "A" on the Senior Honors Thesis/Project.
  - ***Magna Cum Laude*** - meaning "with great praise" is the second highest distinction awarded at graduation. To qualify for *magna cum laude*, a student must achieve a 3.7 - 3.89 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale with a cumulative grade of "A" on the Senior Honors Thesis/Project.
  - ***Cum Laude*** - meaning "with praise" is the third distinction awarded at graduation. To qualify for *cum laude*, a student must achieve a 3.5 - 3.69 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale and complete the Senior Honors Thesis/Project.
- **Special Honors Notation on Transcripts and Diplomas** - Students graduating in the Honors Program receive *In cursu honorum* on their diplomas; qualified Honors graduates receive Latin designation. Students completing the 30 Honors credits with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.25, but less than 3.5 will have a "Honors Program Completed" designation. Those members with 30 Honors credits, but less than a 3.25 GPA or those with fewer than 30 credits may request in writing an "Honors Program Participant" designation. University transcripts identify all Honors coursework as Honors.

- **Honors Identification in Commencement Program** – Cum laude, magna cum laude and summa cum laude are recognized at graduation ceremonies when the student has fulfilled all the requirements in the most recent prior semester. The University of Nevada, Reno commencement program at the graduation ceremony identifies all graduates of the Honors Program.
- **Honors Convocation Ceremony** – Students graduating in the Honors Program are recognized at an Honors Convocation Ceremony and Reception to which graduates’ family and friends are invited. At the ceremony, graduates are awarded stoles and faculty mentors are recognized. The annual *Excellence in Honors Award* is presented to outstanding seniors.

## VIII. OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

The Office of Undergraduate Fellowships provides advice and assistance to University of Nevada, Reno undergraduates and alumni and alumnae interested in applying for undergraduate and grad-level fellowships and scholarships such as the Fulbright, Gates Cambridge, Goldwater, Madison, Marshall, Mitchell, Phi Kappa Phi, Rhodes, Truman, and Udall.

These competitive and prestigious, national fellowships and scholarships are merit-based and require extensive preparation in the application process. Most fellowships require students to submit completed applications during their senior year of college in anticipation of holding a college degree at the time of acceptance of the award. Fellowship options are likely to increase for upper class students and students who have defined courses of study and career goals.

The fellowships vary widely by eligibility requirements, financial award values, number of awards, field of study and career objectives, language requirements, and deadlines.

The Office of Undergraduate Fellowships provides information about available fellowship awards and opportunities; counsels students on choosing the right fellowships; offers guidance in preparing the fellowship application; assists the applicant throughout the application process; offers workshops on the availability of fellowships, the preparation for fellowships, and the application process; sets up screening committees for mock interviewing; provides a panel of fellowship experts, supporting faculty consultants, and previous awardees; and celebrates successes.

Students who are interested in applying for national fellowships must demonstrate proven intellectual and academic achievement, public service orientation, motivation to significantly contribute to a better world, promise of professional excellence, interest in a particular career or discipline, leadership potential, good communication skills, professional and academic connections, and passion and commitment.

If you are interested in applying for a national fellowship or scholarship, please contact the Honors Program.

## IX. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### **Q: Why am I a member of the Honors Program? Why should I stay in the Honors Program?**

**A:** Being a member of the University of Nevada, Reno Honors Program is an honor, indeed. Membership is a mark of distinction that sets you apart from other undergraduates. You are a high achiever, a self-motivator, and a go-getter. The University of Nevada, Reno Honors Program provides an enriching educational opportunity for students like you to grow intellectually, think independently and critically, and engage in new and different learning experiences. You are an exceptional student, an extraordinary member among a community of scholars. The Honors Program supports you in accepting the challenges of an Honors education, one where you are an active participant in your education and an investor in your future success. The Honors Program and its broad community of faculty and friends are committed to rewarding your efforts by providing you with a rich array of Honors courses each semester, an exciting social environment, and unique opportunities to develop new ways of thinking and engaging in stimulating learning experiences.

The benefits of membership are plentiful: graduation with an Honors degree; special recognition of Honors students at graduation; instruction by outstanding teaching faculty; challenging Honors curriculum; small-sized, interactive classes; extended library privileges; stimulating interaction with students and faculty; participation on the Student Honors Council; social and academic activities; Honors orientation and advising; Honors credit through the Study Abroad Program; priority registration; membership in Honorary societies; undergraduate research opportunities and awards; and attendance at national and regional Honors conferences. Participation in the Honors Program enables Honors students to present graduate schools and potential employers with more impressive transcripts and life experiences. Honors students have the *Honors edge*.

### **Q: College is challenging as it is. Will involvement in the Honors Program require substantially more time and work?**

**A:** Honors emphasizes **quality** not **quantity**. Honors is not about doing more work, but doing better work, thinking independently and critically, and being involved in new learning experiences. Honors is an opportunity for you to enhance your educational experiences and intellectual awareness. Whether it is an academic program or a social activity, your life is enriched by an Honors experience. Much of the work you do to graduate with an Honors degree is work you would have done anyway. But to ease the “burden”, the Honors Program incorporates a variety of options: contract courses with a professor of your choice; capstones or senior projects in all majors dually serving as the Honors thesis/project; Honors points in place of up to 6 Honors credits; and small classes, personalized attention, and frequent interaction. You gain a deeper understanding of a topic by taking a different approach to the same course. Honors courses are more challenging, stimulating, and rewarding.

**Q: Will my GPA suffer if I enroll in Honors courses?**

**A:** If you prepare for class, participate fully, and take an active role in the learning process, you should do as well in Honors classes as in regular classes. Research shows that Honors students respond positively to small, supportive classes, and students who enroll in Honors courses earn the same grades they might have received in regular classes. If you approach college as serious business, you will succeed.

**Q: My major is very demanding and I have few electives. Will I be able to obtain enough Honors credits to graduate?**

**A:** Yes. No matter what your major, you are required to complete the core curriculum; the Honors curriculum consists of a number of Honors sections of core courses. In addition, you can take Honors Contract Courses in the Major by arranging for Honors credit with professors of your choosing. You can also earn up to 6 Honors points by participating in the many Honors activities that promote learning experiences in non-classroom educational settings. All Honors students must complete 2 semesters of a Senior Honors Thesis/Project.

**Q: What Honors classes are available each semester?**

**A:** Honors courses are listed and designated in each semester Course Schedule. Primarily courses that fulfill the core curriculum of all undergraduates at UNR, the Honors Program offers such courses in English, Math, Natural Sciences, Fine Arts, Social Sciences, and Core Humanities each semester. Upper-level courses in Psychology, Economics, and Political Sciences are also offered. Classes designated as HON are offered each semester for incoming Honors students and graduating seniors. A complete listing of Honors courses and descriptions are available on the Honors Program Website under Curriculum. Only by obtaining the Honors course call number through the Honors Program office can you, as an Honors student, register on e-Paws for an Honors class.

**Q: When do I register for classes?**

**A:** One of the benefits of membership in the Honors Program is priority registration. As an Honors student, you can register earlier than the general population of students. Follow the instructions included in the published schedule. Course call numbers for Honors classes are available **only** from the Honors Program office. You must register promptly to take advantage of this opportunity.

**Q: How do I get advisement?**

**A:** All Honors Students must participate in Honors advisement at least once each academic year. First-year students and seniors should arrange appointments with their Honors advisors in the fall semester; sophomores and juniors should arrange appointments in the spring semester. Only after an Honors student is advised in the Honors Program, will the student be cleared for registration and given priority registration. In addition, students must meet with an advisor in the major and minor fields of study.

**Q: Is it possible to receive Honors credit while studying internationally?**

**A:** Yes. The Honors Program considers international study an enriching academic and personal experience. In order to receive Honors credit for international study, students must complete both the *Honors 410 Area Study* and the *Leave of Absence* forms online. Honors credits must be arranged prior to registration and travel.

**Q: How can I earn my 30 Honors credits if I am a transfer student?**

**A:** Transfer students should plan to work closely with Honors advisors to take advantage of every opportunity to earn Honors credits. Transfer students are encouraged to take advantage of Honors courses, Honors Points and Honors Contract Courses in the Major whenever it is appropriate.

**Q: Must I notify the Honors Program Office if I change my address, phone number, or email address?**

**A:** Yes. Notify the Honors Program Office *immediately* if you move or change your phone number or email address, even if you change your address during the summer months.

**Q: How do I receive information about the Honors Program and upcoming activities?**

**A:** Get involved! Communicate with other Honors students and faculty. Attend as many activities and events that the Honors Program offers. Stop by the Honors Program office and ask for the latest schedule of events. Consult the Honors Program website. Check the online University Calendar of Events. Make sure your email address and mailing address are current. Read your email. Open your mail. Answer the phone. Spread the news.

**Q: How do I get involved in Honors student activities?**

**A:** All activities sponsored by the Honors Program are open to all Honors students and friends. Come, bring a friend, and get involved. One sure way to become involved in Honors activities is to become an Honors Ambassador. You can also volunteer to initiate an Honors Program event to earn Honors credit. Or you can design your own Honors programming. The Honors Program encourages all students to get involved. Have a voice.

**Q: Can I graduate with Honors without being in the program?**

**A:** No. You can graduate with high distinction or distinction, but the Honors Program is the only way to graduate with an Honors degree and with Latin distinctions.

**Q: Is there going to be any fun?**

**A:** Absolutely. Many opportunities are available so students can build lifelong friendships, develop long-term mentoring relationships with faculty, and collect memorable learning experiences. The Honors Program is dedicated to cultivating an environment that is inclusive, diversified, and welcoming. Exciting social activities are scheduled each semester: ice cream socials, fund raising events, musical performances, reading discussions, balloon race breakfasts, and football tailgates. You too can make your own fun: create study sessions, hold deep intellectual discussions, play board games. All Honors students and friends of the Program are invited to participate to make their own fun.

**Q: I am interested in studying internationally at Cambridge or Oxford. How can I get information about national scholarships and fellowships?**

**A:** National fellowships such as Fulbright, Gates Cambridge, Goldwater, Madison, Marshall, Mitchell, Rhodes, Truman, and Udall are highly competitive and prestigious awards that require extensive preparation in the application process. Awards vary widely by eligibility requirements, financial award amounts, fields of study, and career objectives, language requirements, and deadlines. Any student who wishes to apply for a grant, fellowship or award should contact the Office of Undergraduate Fellowships in the Honors Program office in the Jot Travis Building. A description of individual fellowships and eligibility requirements are available on the Office of Undergraduate Fellowship website.

**Q: What if I still have questions?**

**A:** The Honors Program is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The office number is (775) 784-1455. Your advisors may be contacted in person, via email (addresses on page one of this handbook) or by phone. Our staff is happy to help you find answers to any questions not addressed in this handbook.

## X. RESOURCES

**Advising Center:** (775-784-4684) Lower level of Edmund J. Cain Hall, Suite 102 (EJCH 102)

The Advising Center provides academic advising to all students who are undecided, transfers, disqualified, non-degree, and Bachelor of General Studies candidates.

**Center for Student Cultural Diversity:** (784-4937) 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Joe Crowley Student Union  
Resource and referral center for multicultural affairs and community resources. The center develops and promotes retention programs for African American, Asian American, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, and multiracial students on campus.

**Counseling Services:** (784-4648) Thompson Building

Primary mental health counseling center for UNR students that provides individual, couples, and group counseling free to students who have paid the \$30/semester fee. Students may discuss problems, as well as career and educational objectives.

**Disabilities Resource Center:** (784-6000) Thompson Building

Ensures that students with disabilities have equal access to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from all university programs. Appropriate accommodations for each student are determined through proper documentation and related course requirements.

**Downing Counseling Clinic:** (784-1596) College of Education Building

Training center that offers counseling services to individuals, groups, couples, and families from the university and community. There is no charge for students from UNR and TMCC.

**Police Services:** (784-4013) Fitzgerald Student Services Building

Enforces all federal, state, and local laws and ordinances on university property and a portion of adjacent streets. The university police may be called upon for non-criminal public service as well as more traditional kinds of law enforcement functions, including public safety, crime prevention and other presentations.

**Psychological Service Center (PSC):** (784-6668) Mack Social Science Building

Training center that provides individual, group, couple and family psychotherapy and assessment. Community clients are primarily seen, however, upon referral from Counseling Services, UNR students can be seen.

**Residential Life, Housing and Food Service:** (784-1113) Juniper Hall [housing@unr.edu](mailto:housing@unr.edu)

Provides services for our residents beyond room and board to make each resident's on-campus experience as positive as possible. Trained staff is available to assist residence hall students 24 hours 7 days a week.

**Sexual Assault Prevention and Counseling Program (SAPAC):** (327-5018/771-8007) Mack Social Science Building, Room 314

This program educates university students and staff how to prevent sexual assault and other forms of sexual exploitation. Sexual assault counseling is provided free.

**Student Health Center:** (784-6598) Redfield Building (North Campus)

Addresses physical health and medication issues. Services are free to students who have paid the \$79/semester health fee.

**Student Judicial, Mediation and Advocacy Services:** (784-4388) Clark Administration Building, lake level. Administrates student discipline process, including academic dishonesty and classroom misconduct, and serves as student advocate and mediator for campus.

**Substance Abuse Treatment Program:** (784-4648) Thompson Building

Alcohol and other drug counseling services. All services are confidential, and include individual and group session, safe-ride/safe party materials, education and prevention information.