

HAMEL HONORS AND SCHOLARS COLLEGE

The Hamel Honors and Scholars College (HHSC) was established in 2024, an evolution of the University Honors Program (UHP) that was created in 1983. The HHSC aspires to be regionally, nationally, and globally recognized as a unique academic community where students and faculty can collaborate on innovative transformative thought, learning, and scholarship. It provides a community for motivated, inquisitive, high-achieving students to interact with outstanding faculty while engaging in experiential and community-based learning, external engagement, and meaningful scholarship.

Admissions

The Office of Admissions identifies a number of qualified incoming first-year students to be admitted to the Honors College. Transfer students are also reviewed by the Admissions office for invitation to the Honors College. After matriculating at UNH, first-years whose first semester grades are in the top 10% of their year in each college are invited to join the Honors College in January. Students may also petition to join the program if they have a GPA of at least 3.5.

Curriculum

To graduate with a designation of University Honors, students must complete 32 Honors Units. Students who transfer to UNH having earned the equivalent of 3 semesters of credits or more at their previous institutions may complete University Honors with 24 Honors Units, but must meet the minimum for each category as described below.

Students choose which Honors Units they will pursue from a menu of academically enriching opportunities, in consultation with Honors College advisors. Units can be earned from both credit-bearing and non-credit bearing activities. Credit-bearing activities typically award the same number of Honors Units as credits (a 4-credit course is worth 4 Honors Units). For non-credit bearing activities, Honors Units are calculated based on time spent, with each Honors Unit representing approximately 45 hours of work.

Students must complete Honors Units in 4 categories, each of which specifies a minimum number of units. These requirements account for 14 Honors Units; students may choose what courses and experiences will comprise the remaining 18 Honors Units.

1. **Honors Gateway Experiences:** 2 Honors Units
2. **Honors Courses:** At least 8 Honors Units
3. **Cocurricular Learning:** At least 2 Honors Units
4. **Culminating Experience:** At least 2 Honors Units

Honors Gateway Experiences

To support student belonging and connection, the Honors College offers a variety of Gateway Experiences, which are both learning and social activities. Gateway Experiences range from attending campus events followed by facilitated discussions to place-based experiences exploring New Hampshire's natural environment. Upon completion of 4 Gateway Experiences, students are awarded 2 Honors Units.

Honors Courses

Each semester, the Honors College offers a range of courses designed for enhanced academic rigor and depth. Most of these also fulfill Discovery Program requirements. Enrollment in these courses is restricted to members of the Honors College. Students who are not members of the Honors College, but who wish to take an Honors course, may email honors.college@unh.edu to request permission. Most Honors courses are 4 credits, and confer 4 Honors Units.

Students may also designate regular courses as Honors by making an agreement with the professor and completing the Honors Designation Form, specifying additional Honors-level work that engages with the course material on a deeper level. Honors-designated courses earn 2 Honors Units by default. However, if the student and professor agree that the Honors work will be less or more than the standard amount, they may propose that the course count for 1, 3, or 4 Honors Units.

At least 8 units of Honors coursework are required for graduation with University Honors from UNH-Durham. Students at UNH-Manchester must take 4 units of Honors coursework.

Cocurricular Learning

High-impact cocurricular learning opportunities allow Honors students to focus and expand on areas of interest outside the traditional classroom. These experiences include study abroad, research work and experiences, academic peer mentoring and teaching, applying for certain national fellowships, specially designed community-based projects, and more. Students may select experiences from a pre-approved list or propose their own. Each cocurricular experience is assigned a number of Honors Units based mainly on the required time commitment. Students must complete at least 2 Honors Units of cocurricular experiences in order to graduate with University Honors.

Culminating Experiences

In order to graduate with University Honors, each student must complete a Culminating Experience. The Culminating Experience counts for at least 2 and generally for no more than 8 Honors Units, and is usually completed in the Junior or Senior year. Students may complete the Culminating Experience in the following ways:

- **Honors Thesis:** a work of sustained and independent scholarship completed under faculty supervision. Each major sets its own requirements for the thesis, and students register for the thesis course designated by the department. Alternatively, students may elect to write a thesis outside their primary department. This may be appropriate when a student seeks to work with a specific faculty advisor outside their own department or program, or when the envisioned subject or goals of a thesis would not meet the thesis requirements established for their major. In these circumstances, students may seek the help of Honors College advising staff in locating an appropriate faculty advisor. Students are expected to begin thesis planning and communication with faculty well in advance of the semester in which they register. Honors Units will correspond to credits.

- **As Determined by Honors in Major:** Some departments choose to specify a different final Honors experience in their Honors in Major program (a group design project or theatrical performance, for example). Any thesis or Honors final project that has been successfully completed by a student under the applicable requirements for Honors in Major will also be accepted as the Culminating Experience for earning University Honors. Honors Units will correspond to credits.
- **Honors Synthesis:** The Synthesis is an alternative for students who seek a more holistic, less field-specific final Honors experience. It is an exercise in which students reflect on meaningful learning from throughout their college career, create an appropriate deliverable, and communicate their experience with the Honors peer community. Students must seek prior approval of their Synthesis through a proposal that specifies what deliverable they will produce and why this is the best culmination of their Honors journey. Students are also expected to engage in peer review and to share their Synthesis with other Honors students. The Honors Synthesis counts for 2 Honors Units.

Good Standing in the Honors College

Honors College members must maintain a GPA of 3.2 in the Freshman year and 3.5 thereafter. Students who do not reach the required GPA by the end of each academic year will be notified and offered an opportunity to petition to remain in the College. Students must meet the required GPA in order to graduate with University Honors.

In order to remain in good standing in the Honors College, students must make continued progress in their accumulation of Honors Units. Students who fail to meet minimum unit thresholds may have their Honors College status suspended or revoked.

A grade of B or higher is required for the Honors Thesis and other final Honors experiences.

Honors in Major

Most majors at UNH include an option for Honors in Major. Requirements are set by each department, not by the Honors College. Experiences counting toward Honors in Major typically also count toward Honors College completion, but the awards are separate. Students may graduate with University Honors, Honors in Major, or both.

More Information

More information is available at the [Hamel Honors and Scholars College website](#). Honors College students can track their progress and sign up for Gateways and other experiences via the [Honors Unit Dynamic Dashboard](#). You may also [email](mailto:honors.college@unh.edu) honors.college@unh.edu, call (603) 862-3928, or visit the Honors College suite on the second floor of Huddleston Hall.

<https://www.unh.edu/honors/>