

Comparison between Existing and Proposed Honors Program

Department or Division	Current Credits	Proposed Credits	Net Change
Creative Arts Sequence	9 (CA 101h, 102h, 103h)	9	No change
Social Science Sequence	8-9 (GEOG 106h, 107h)	8-9	No change
Social Science Elective	3-4 (from non-honors classes)	3-4	No change
English	8 (ENG 107h, 108h)	8	No change
Philosophy	9 (PHL 207h, 208h, 209h)	6	-3 (eliminate 209H)
General Science Sequence	15 (GS 201h, 202h, 203h)	12	-3 (change 5 cr. classes to 4 cr. classes)
Honors Electives	0	6	+6 (add new category, UD & LD both allowed)
Honors Seminar	3-4 (varies annually, UD credits)	3-4	No change
Thesis Prep. Class	1 (H303)	1	No change
Thesis Credit	3 (H403, Indep. Study)	3	No change
Total Credits	59-62 credits	59-62	No change

Rationales for Individual Changes

1. Reducing General Science Sequence from 15 credits to 12 credits

The three general science courses in Honors (GS 201h, 202h, 203h) were originally offered for 4 credits each, for a total of 12 credits. They were later changed to 5 credit classes by administration to generate revenue. Science faculty were not compensated for this extra credit; nor did their classes meet for 5 weekly contact hours. The change, in other words, was purely cosmetic.

The Honors Committee sees no reason to preserve this 5 credit designation, which was fiscal in nature and requires students to pay for extra credits. The Natural Science and Math division also supports this change, which will have no impact on the content or the contact hours of their Honors classes.

Although not a basis for change, when surveyed in January 2010, 81.5% of the current Honors students supported this recommendation. (70% survey return rate.)

2. Reducing Philosophy from 9 credits to 6 credits (eliminating PHL 209H)

When originally created, the Honors Program featured 9 credits of philosophy (PHL 207h, 208h, 209h). This requirement was reduced by Faculty Senate vote in 1995-1996 to 6 credits.

The Honors Committee deliberated the longest concerning the allocation of philosophy credits within the Honors Program. Of special consideration were the following issues:

- With the lone exception of philosophy, no other department or division participating in Honors exceeds the number of credits they have in the non-Honors LACC. The non-honors LACC requirement for philosophy is 3 credits; Honors students are asked to take 9 credits.
- When surveyed, Honors students cite the philosophy requirement as disproportionate. Few Honors students major or minor in philosophy (approx. 1-2 per year), and the largest demographics for Honors majors or minors are (in order) College of Education (esp. Elementary/Middle), Biology, and Psychology. 9 credits of philosophy are unnecessary to most Honors students' career paths.
- The Honors philosophy requirement was reduced by Faculty Senate vote from 9 to 6 hours in 1995-1996. The requirement remained at 6 hours from 1996-2003. In the 2003 catalog, however, the requirement was restored to 9 hours. This program change originated in the 2002-2003 Honors Committee, but it is unclear to the current Honors Committee whether it was approved by the Faculty Senate. No paperwork exists in the Honors archive, the LAS Dean's office, or the Senate archive in the Provost's office.

The current Honors Committee agreed that restoring the philosophy requirement to its 1996-2003 level was most appropriate. The committee understands that the philosophy department may be displeased with this revision but feels that such a change is in the best long-term interests of the Honors Program and its students.

Although not a basis for change, when surveyed in January 2010, 92.35% of the current Honors students supported this recommendation. (70% survey return rate.)

3. Adding Honors Elective Category of 6 credits

Honors students are exempt from requirements in Writing, Communication Studies, and Health/Physical Education that are otherwise required of all WOU students. The Honors Committee received a written request from one of these departments to be included in the Honors Program. Nor was this the only department to express interest in participating in Honors.

After considering numerous issues and examining how other Honors Programs addressed this issue (see pg. 8-9), the Honors Committee decided that the best way to accommodate such interest was not by adding new department-specific requirements but rather by creating a 6 credit Honors Elective category. This new category could be filled by Honors students from among an increased number of piloted Honors courses, chosen according to their interest and/or academic major/minor.

Based on faculty feedback, the committee further proposed that upper-division as well as lower-division credits could be used to fulfill this requirement, allowing the students

to enroll in an additional Honors Seminar(s) (always upper-division) and/or the piloted lower-division courses.

Such piloted courses would also allow departments to propose offerings that need not be offered annually. Historically, this has been a problem for smaller departments that wished to participate in Honors. Piloted courses would also be proposed by departments and/or faculty at the same time that the call for Honors Seminars is made, early fall term.

These elective credits could not be used to substitute for any of the required courses in the English, Philosophy, Social Science, General Science, or Creative Arts sequences.

Although not a basis for change, when surveyed in January 2010, 95.4% of the current Honors students supported this recommendation. (70% survey return rate.)

Impact of Changes on Honors Program Identity

In the opinion of the Honors Committee, the six credits of proposed changes will have little to no impact on the 60-credit Honors Program's definition or identity. In fact, it will more closely align WOU Honors with other in-state Honors Programs that offer wider curricular diversity (see pgs. 7-8). The official language defining the Honors Program appears in the current WOU academic catalog:

“An alternative LACC is offered by WOU's Honors Program to students who have demonstrated outstanding ability, motivation, and academic achievement. Through the sustained contact the curriculum provides between students and teachers, the Honors Program forges a learning community committed to scholarly inquiry and the life of the mind. Upon completion of the Honors Program LACC, honors students are ideally prepared to excel in their academic major and minor courses. Each honors student integrates his or her learning into an honors thesis that is publicly presented in the spring term of senior year.

Honors Program LACC courses are open only to Honors Program students. Students interested in exploring the challenge of the Honors Program should contact the director as soon as they begin to consider this opportunity. Though acceptance usually occurs before the student starts attending WOU, a limited number of students can be accepted before the start of their second quarter. There is also a two year program for students who have completed their LACC courses either at WOU or through transfer from another institution” (48).

The Honors Committee does not feel that the proposed changes would modify this description.

Timeline of Campus Consultations

The following meetings, conversations, and communications informed the Honors Committee's proposals over the past two years. This list is not meant to be exhaustive and is provided solely as an informational courtesy, not as a required element of the proposal process.

The 2008-2009 academic year was devoted to gathering information and feedback about the current Honors Program. The 2009-2010 academic year has been devoted to refining proposals and seeking change. Faculty were invited to contribute to the committee's deliberations during both stages of development, including in January 2010, after the committee finalized its revisions.

Although not listed below, numerous meetings with administrators were held over the past two years to discuss the funding for the Honors Program and its courses.

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| Spring 2008: | Natural Science and Math division meeting
Curricular conversations with faculty in Music, Dance, Theater
Email conversations with faculty in Philosophy
Honors Students Surveyed |
| Summer 2008: | Curricular conversations with faculty in English, Music,
Philosophy, Communication Studies |
| September 2008: | Humanities division meeting
English department meeting |
| October 2008: | Creative Arts division meeting
Social Sciences division meeting
Psychology division meeting
English department meeting
Email to all faculty in Creative Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences
Curricular conversations/meetings with faculty in Music, German,
Geography, Communication Studies, and Writing
Invited presentation before Faculty Senate
Email conversation with Steve Taylor, NSM chair
Meeting with Susan Daniel, Philosophy dept. head
Honors Committee Meeting (devoted to curriculum) |
| November 2008: | Creative Arts division meeting
Humanities division meeting
Curricular conversations/meetings with faculty from Philosophy,
Music, Dance, Theater, Art
Meeting with Peggy Pederson, chair of Health and Physical Ed. |

- Honors Committee meeting (devoted to curriculum)
- December 2008: Humanities division meeting
 Curricular conversations/meetings with faculty in Writing, English, Communications Studies, German
 Meeting with Steve Taylor, chair of Natural Science & Math
 Email conversations with Ryan Hickerson, Mark Perlman, Susan Daniel, philosophy department
 Meeting with Bob Turner, former Honors Program director
 Carol Harding, Humanities division chair, instructs Humanities departments to provide feedback to Honors Committee
- January 2009: Division of Teacher Education division meeting
 English department meeting
 Written feedback from five members of English department
 Curricular conversations/meetings with faculty in Communication Studies, Dance, Theater
 Email conversations with chairs of HPE & DTE
 Written feedback from English, Communication Studies, and Philosophy departments presented to Honors Committee
 Honors Committee meeting (mostly devoted to curriculum)
- February 2009: Meeting with Adele Schepige, chair of division of Teacher Ed.
 Curricular conversations/meetings with faculty in Writing, English, Communication Studies, Earth Science, and German
- April 2009: Curricular conversations/meetings with faculty in Writing, Geography, Communication Studies
- May 2009: Curricular conversations/meetings with faculty in Writing and Communication Studies
 Phone conversation with Bob Turner, former Honors Director
 Email conversation with Mark Girod and Chloe Meyers, division of Teacher Ed.
- June 2009: Curricular conversations/meetings with faculty in Writing, Communication Studies, and Philosophy
- September 2009: Communication Studies department meeting
 Curricular conversations with faculty in Humanities division
- October 2009: Curricular conversations/meetings with faculty in Writing & Communication Studies
 Honors Committee meeting (introduce and discuss proposals)

- November 2009: Honors Committee meeting (refine proposals)
- December 2009: Honors Committee meeting (proposals approved by unanimous vote)
- January 2010: Email to all faculty soliciting feedback on proposals
 Feedback received and discussed by committee
 English department meeting
 Honors Committee meeting (proposals reconfirmed)
 Faculty Senate Executive Committee (curricular process)
 Honors Students Surveyed (regarding proposals)
 Curricular conversation/meeting with Sriram Khe, former Honors Program director
- February 2010: Faculty Senate Executive Committee (curricular process)
 Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee (curricular process)
 Honors Committee meeting (partly curricular)
 Psychology division meeting
 Faculty Senate (new business)

A Note on the Procedure for Advancing Honors Proposals

Before forwarding its recommendations, the Faculty Senate Honors Committee sought guidance from the Executive Committee. Over the past month, the chair of the Honors Committee and the director of the Honors Program met twice with the Executive Committee. The Senate President invited representatives from the Academic Requirements Committee, the Senate Curriculum Committee, and the Committee on Committees to attend the second of these meetings. The Executive Committee drew comparisons between the Graduate Studies Committee and the Honors Committee, in that both could function as the curriculum committees for their appropriate programs.

At its February 2010 meeting, the Senate Curriculum Committee voted in unanimous agreement that Honors Committee recommendations would route directly to the Executive Committee, as do their own recommendations. The Honors Committee and the Curriculum Committee are both senate-level committees with diverse representation. The Executive Committee subsequently confirmed this process in writing to the Honors director and committee chair.

The Honors Committee sought this guidance because historically there has been no clear articulation of the process for advancing program changes for the Honors Program.

Comparison of WOU Honors to other in-state Honors Programs

WOU's Honors Program requires a significantly high number of credits (59-62), tied with UO for the highest in the state. The program summaries below confirm the high degree of curricular flexibility built into each comparator program, in comparison to WOU's Honors Program.

The Faculty Senate Honors Committee did not model its recommendations on any particular program below, as our program does offer certain elements of distinction; however, we did admire and choose to adopt the Honors Elective category, which appears in many other programs as a way to accommodate faculty and departmental interest in offering Honors courses. Sometimes this category appears as "Honors Colloquia," other times as "Honors Electives." Similarly, we also noted the absence of required philosophy courses in many of the programs below, although of course philosophy could appear in those programs as a colloquia or elective.

University of Oregon, Clark Honors College (59 credits)

Honors Literature (8 credits)
 Honors History (8 credits)
 One additional Honors literature or history course (4 credits)
 Honors Lab Science (4 credits)
 Honors Science (4 credits)
 Honors Thesis Credits (3 credits)
 Multicultural (2 of 3 courses for 8 credits)
 Honors Colloquia (five courses, including one from A&S, Science, and Social Science) (20 credits)

Oregon State University (30 credits)

Honors Writing (3 credits)
 Honors BACC Core (12 credits)
 Honors Colloquia (4 credits)
 Honors Electives (6 credits)
 Thesis Credit (5 credits)

Portland State University (45 credits)

Culture of Measurement, Natural World, 17th century (5 credits)
 Critical Perspectives, Social World, 18th century (5 credits)
 Positivist Philosophy, 19th and 20th centuries (5 credits)
 Classical Period (4 credits)
 Medieval Period (4 credits)
 Liberal Arts or Sciences (choose one, either Humanities or post-Enlightenment reform, 4 credits)
 Honors Colloquia (8 credits)
 Thesis credit (8 credits)
 Honors Electives (3 credits)

Southern Oregon University (40 credits)

“Honors coursework (9-12 classes) ideally spread across University Studies strands and/or other offerings, as available” (36 credits)

Practicum (4 credits)

Senior Thesis or Project

Eastern Oregon University (variable credits)

Honors Orientation Seminar (HONR 201, 3 credits)

Controversies in Contemporary Society (HONR 301, 3 credits)

Honors Independent Project

Honors Capstone Project

University of Portland (variable credits)

1 week colloquium before fall semester

Year-long freshman core requirement course

Year-long sophomore core requirement course

Honors elective (non-Honors course taken as Honors credit)

Two 1-credit interdisciplinary reading/discussion courses

Senior Capstone Project

No Honors Programs

Willamette University (departmental Honors only)

Reed College

Lewis and Clark College