

Honors Program Mission

The Honors Program provides motivated and talented students with an enriched educational experience. Through limited class size and close interactions with faculty, the program provides talented students with a deeper understanding of content and an opportunity to develop critical thinking and discussion skills that prepare them for a dynamic world. In the Honors Program, a commitment to learning is combined with a spirit of inquiry and a critical understanding of the responsibilities of global citizenship. By bringing together the ideas from diverse traditions of knowledge, the Honors Program helps prepare creative and innovative leaders to meet emerging challenges in our global community.

GPA Requirements

Honors Students must maintain a 3.5 cumulative GPA each semester to be considered members in **good standing**. Grade audits will be performed each semester.

If an honors student's cumulative GPA is below 3.5, they will be placed on **probation** for the next semester.

If students on probation finish the following semester with a Northwest cumulative average below a 3.5, they will be placed on **provisional status** and lose their early registration benefit. Students on provisional status will remain within the Honors Program and retain the ability to participate in Honors Courses and Honors Experiences while working to improve their cumulative GPA. Once a student's cumulative GPA is once again raised to a minimum of 3.5, they will automatically be re-admitted back into the Honors Program as members in good standing. A student on provisional status may not graduate as having completed the Honors Program or receive honors recognition.

Course Requirements

Complete 4 courses totaling 12 credit hours of Honors Northwest Core courses (sections designated with an H) or upper division courses (300 level or above) as Honors Credit Agreements or any combination of the two types of courses.

Transfer students with an Associate's degree: complete 3 Honors Credit Agreements and 4 experiences (two in each of the two categories listed below).

Honors Experience Requirements

Complete 3 of the following Honors experiences; at least one in each of the two categories listed below.

Service / Leadership Category

- Alternative spring break sponsored by the Office of Student Involvement
- Lead Green / Student Leadership training sponsored by Exemplary Leadership Academy (ELA)

- RESPOND training or Green Dot training by Wellness Services
- Safe Zone training by the DEI Office
- Community service and/or Service Learning (20 hours) in one academic year
- Other student ideas as approved by the Honors Director
- See the guidelines below for more details on these different options

Personal / Academic Growth Category

- Completion of an independent original creative work or research appropriate to the discipline
- Presentation of original creative work or research
- Publication of original work or research
- Participation in colloquia, including
 - SAC Lecture Series & Diversity Events (see approved list on NW Online)
 - Creative and Performing Arts (selected from theater and music performances)
- Participation in a professional internship related to a possible career
- Other student ideas as approved by the Honors Director
- See the guidelines below for more details on these different options

Student Process for Honors Experiences

For each experience indicated above, students must file your "**intent to participate**" (due prior to the experience) as a comment on this assignment. In that comment, outline your anticipated activities and expected outcomes (paper, presentation, journal, reflection essay, etc.) that would complete the experience and explain how it supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program. If your experience requires a completed and signed form, upload it as an attachment to a comment on the appropriate assignment on Northwest Online. Please note that this requirement may be altered at a future time to require a signed form for all experiences.

Upon completion of the experience, a letter or email from the sponsoring faculty member or supervisor, as needed per the experience and the Honors Program guidelines, must be sent to the Honors Program Director, and the student must submit a paper reflecting on the experience and connecting it to the Honors mission and goals; upload the reflection paper to the appropriate assignment on Northwest Online. See the specific requirements for each experience as there may be additional requirements.

Paper Requirements: Papers should be in Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1 inch margins, double spaced and should be submitted to Northwest Online within 2 weeks of completing the experience.

Specifics for Honors Experiences

Service/ Learning Category

- **Alternative Spring Break:** Alternative Spring Break is a faculty-led service or outreach program that occurs over the Northwest spring break. The overall goal of this program is to allow students to experience other places while helping others and meeting new

people. Alternative Spring Break fundraises for the trip and spends months ahead of time preparing for all of the amazing opportunities they are going to experience.

- *Validation:* A 3 page reflection paper on the experience, how it impacted you, and how it supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program.
- **Lead Green / Student Leadership Training / Exemplary Leadership Academy:** Students would, within an academic year, participate in and complete the leadership training offered by the Office of Student Involvement. The program will involve interactive activities, workouts, and presentations by student peer mentors. Topics may include leadership in the workforce.
 - *Validation:* A signed letter or email from ELA and a 3 page reflection paper on the experience, how it impacted you, how you plan to incorporate the training into your time at Northwest, and how it supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program.
- **RESPOND Training:** RESPOND training is offered by Wellness Services and is designed to teach the campus community (students, faculty, and staff) how to recognize and respond to mental health concerns. For more information and to register: <https://www.nwmissouri.edu/wellness/respond.htm>.
 - *Validation:* A signed letter or email from Wellness Services (or a scan of your certificate) and a 3 page reflection paper on the experience, how you plan to incorporate the training into your time at Northwest, and how completing this training supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program.
 - *Note:* **Safe Zone Training** and **Green Dot Training** also are acceptable Honors experiences for this category and will follow the same guidelines as RESPOND training.
- **Community Service or Service Learning:**
 - *Community Service:* a volunteer experience that allows you to donate free time, services, and skills to help the community (campus, neighborhood, town, country, or global) on an unpaid, frequent, and ongoing basis. Faith-based or politically-motivated opportunities are potential options as long as volunteer time is not spent recruiting. See Honors Program Director to clarify any uncertainties.
 - *Service Learning:* courses that combine volunteering in the community with a structured learning environment provided by a formal Northwest course. While credit bearing service-learning courses count as Honors Experiences, the credits do not count towards fulfilling the minimum credit requirement for Honors coursework. While these courses automatically count as non-course Honors Experiences, Honors student will still need to submit of a “form of intent” for this experience.
 - *Validation:* A minimum of 20 hours in one academic term and must be documented either through Bearcat Link (enter the hours with the appropriate organization and upload a screenshot of that entry) or a paper timesheets (signed by your site supervisor – available on the Canvas site; upload the completed timesheets) and a 3 page reflection paper on the experience, how it impacted you, and how it supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program.
 - *Note:* If you are completing service hours for a student organization (as a requirement for that organization), you may only receive Honors experience credit ONE TIME for service hours.

- **Study Abroad Trips:** Students may participate in a study abroad trip through the Study Abroad Office or one sponsored by various schools/departments at Northwest. Full semester and shorter faculty-led trips can count for this experience. Students also may enroll in Honors-specific study abroad trips when they are led.
 - Validation: An email or letter from the Study Abroad Office confirming that you completed a study abroad experience and a 3 page reflection paper on the experience, how it impacted you, and how it supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program.

Personal/ Academic Growth Category

- **Completion of Original Creative Work or Research:** Projects whereby a student, under the supervision of a faculty member, collects or creates original data/work that is new to the discipline (not a review of past works). This can be done as a formal Independent Study course or an informal arrangement between a faculty member and Honors student. Honors credit will be awarded to those students who complete the work and expected outcomes (e.g. scientific report, play script, musical score, poem, etc.) and submit this work to the sponsoring faculty member for approval.
 - Validation: A signed letter or email from the sponsoring faculty member and a 3 page reflection paper on the experience, the project you completed, and how it supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program.
- **Presentation of Original Creative Work or Research:** Projects whereby a student, under the supervision of a faculty member, collects or creates original data/work that is new to the discipline (not a review of past works). This can be done as a formal Independent Study course or an informal arrangement between a faculty member and Honors student. Honors credit will be awarded to those students who then present this work at a formal meeting or conference. The Celebration of Quality at Northwest may be considered, but other campus presentations will not.
 - Validation: A signed letter or email from the sponsoring faculty member and a 3 page reflection paper on the experience and how it supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program.
- **Publication:** Honors credit will be awarded to those students who, under the supervision or mentorship of a faculty member, publish original or creative work in a manner that is appropriate to the discipline. Publication should be of a professional nature that is in written or digital form that has been reviewed by peers or an editor, disseminated and made available to the public at large, and can be formally referenced. Examples: *The Bluebird – Quarterly Journal of The Audubon Society of Missouri*; *Transactions of the Missouri Academy of Science*.
 - Validation: Students would provide a copy of the original or creative work, a copy of the letter indicating acceptance of the work, and a formal citation if available at that time. Works that have been accepted for publication and are in press are acceptable for honors credit. In press works may not as yet have a citation from the hardcopy of a journal but may have a DOI. Students also submit a 3 page reflection paper on the experience, the project you completed, and how it supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program.

- **Participation in Colloquia:** This requires participation in a minimum of 3 events/activities in one of the categories below with a reflection paper on each event/activity submitted to the Honors Office within two weeks of the event/activity. Honors credit will be awarded to those students who, within one semester, attend a minimum of 3 such events/performances.
 - **Validation:** Students will be required to submit a 1-2 page reflection on each event/activity attended: provide an overview of the colloquium attended, what you learned from it, and how it impacted you. Once all 3 events/activities are complete, students need to write a final 3 page reflection paper examining all 3 events/activities collectively: explain the value of these events, examine the impact that they have had on you, and demonstrate how your involvement in them supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program.
 - **Lecture Series & Diversity Events/Colloquium:** The university sponsors a number of lecture series on campus such as the Distinguished Lecture Series sponsored by the Faculty Senate and the SAC Speaks Lecture Series sponsored by Student Activities Council (SAC). Additional Career Pathing Training Lectures are made available by the Career Pathing Program of Student Employment, and the DEI Office offers events that promote racial harmony, campus diversity, and physical and educational accessibility to give all students opportunities for success. Together these provide access to around 20 campus-wide lectures per academic year. For information regarding university events, go to the university calendar. See NW Online for an approved list of events.
 - **Creative and Performing Arts Colloquium:** The university sponsors a number of performing arts recitals, including but not limited to theater performances, senior recitals, and Encore performances held throughout the academic year.
- **Internships:** An internship may count as Honors experience if it is: Associated with an organization relevant to your academic or career interest and/or future career goals, with an opportunity to connect learning in the classroom to real-world projects; comprised of clearly-defined, value-added projects benefiting the organization as well as your own growth and learning; at least one semester in duration (or equivalent), representing a minimum time commitment of 40 hours to one organization or business over the course of the semester; paid, volunteer, or for credit; supervised by a mentor within the host organization; designed to include an end-of-term evaluation
 - **Validation:** Submit an end-of-term evaluation written by your site supervisor to the Honors Program office (emailed directly from the site supervisor to honors@nwmissouri.edu) and a 3 page reflection paper on the experience, how it has impacted you, and how it supports the mission and goals of the Honors Program.

Other Student Ideas as approved by the Honors Program Director. For either of the two experience categories indicated above, a proposal form (on the Canvas site) must be completed for pre-approval. The form will help guide students in evaluating if this would be a suitable option for Honors credit as well as further explanation for the Honors Program Director.