Honors Courses

Honors courses are open to qualified undergraduates in any school of the university.

University Honors Program

The University Honors Program provides opportunities for academically outstanding undergraduate students to develop their full potential during their undergraduate years. The Honors Program seeks to bring together students from diverse backgrounds and from every school at KU to grow through honors classes, honors seminars, and co-curricular events. Additionally, the program brings together students and faculty members in a teaching and research environment that ensures high academic achievements and standards.

Honors classes are typically small, discussion-oriented, and taught by full-time members of the faculty. Most honors courses fulfill KU Core (or major) requirements and deal with introductory fundamentals and principles, but they are likely to do so in more depth than their non-honors equivalents. While there is no required number of honors hours a student must enroll in each semester, students must complete 18 hours of honors credit to graduate with University Honors. During each student’s first year in the program, a semester-long seminar provides an introduction to an academic area of study in an informal setting that allows students to get to know one another and their instructor. The seminar explores the research methods of a discipline and acquaints students with resources available at KU.

Whatever a student’s school or major, Honors Program advisors recommend that they explore their interests through the broad curriculum choices KU has to offer, expanding their knowledge through a range of liberal arts and science courses. Additionally, Honors students are required to engage in educational experiences beyond the classroom such as research, study abroad, internships, or community service to graduate with University Honors.

Honors advising involves regular, personalized meetings with honors staff, faculty fellows, or specially selected advisors from across the university. The program’s staff facilitates early and frequent contact with academic advisors in the students’ areas of interest. Honors students benefit from priority enrollment, which provides flexibility in planning one’s academic curriculum.

University Honors also houses the Office of Fellowships & Scholarships, which coordinates merit-based scholarship opportunities for all qualified students at KU, regardless of affiliation with University Honors. Among other projects, OFS coordinates the University Scholars Program and the campus-wide nomination process for many competitive national awards, including the Goldwater, Truman, Rhodes, Marshall, Mitchell, and Udall scholarships.

Admission

Students from all backgrounds who are seeking to be challenged academically, personalized guidance, and an intellectual community during their time at KU are encouraged to apply to the University Honors Program. For incoming freshmen, applications are evaluated on the basis of high school curriculum, unweighted high school GPA, activities and involvement, standardized test scores, and an essay. For first- and second-year KU students and incoming transfer students, applications are evaluated based on college GPA, involvement and activities, and two essays. Students interested in applying can learn more at the Honors website.
Current Requirements:

To complete the University Honors Program, you must finish 8 honors units, a freshman honors seminar (or current/transfer honors seminar) and have a minimum 3.25 GPA in courses at KU (your KU GPA rather than the KU+Transfer GPA).

Breakdown of the 8 Honors Units

1. **Honors Courses Requirement (minimum of 6 courses):** Must be fulfilled by completing Honors Courses, Graduate Level Courses (700-level course or above), a Less Commonly Taught Language (maximum 2 courses count towards completion), and/or an Honors Course Contract (300-level course or above, maximum 2 contracts count towards completion). The freshman honors seminar (or current/transfer honors seminar) is a separate requirement and does not count towards this requirement.

2. **Honors Experiences Requirement (minimum of 1 experience):** Must consist of the following Honors Experiences: study abroad, departmental honors, documented research experience, approved and documented internship experience, or approved and documented community service. Fill out an Honors Experience Form for your experience to count towards Honors Completion. For questions about fulfilling this requirement, call 785-864-4225.

3. **The 8th unit may be fulfilled with either an Honors Course or Honors Experience.**

Proposed Requirements:

Completion of the Program

To graduate with University Honors, a student must complete:

1. A first-year honors seminar.
2. A minimum of six honors courses totaling at least 18 credit hours (may include honors courses, less-commonly taught languages, graduate-level courses numbered 700 and above, and other courses completed under an Honors Course Contract). Honors courses may be counted towards the completion of the KU Core, major/minor requirements, Enhanced Learning Experiences, or may be taken as electives.
3. Four Enhanced Learning Experiences (ELEs) out of a list of nine options (Public Service, Cultural Literacy & Social Justice, Global Citizenship, Aesthetic Engagement, Social Entrepreneurship & Professional Development, Leadership, Research Skills & In-depth Learning, Interdisciplinarity or Breadth of Learning, and an Open-Ended Field).

To remain in good standing with University Honors, students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher and demonstrate continued progress towards completion of the requirements listed above.

This curriculum applies to students who started with Honors at KU in Fall 2016 or after.

Nunemaker Center

Nunemaker Center is the home of the Honors Program, located across the street from Templin Hall, the honors dorm at KU. Honors students are encouraged to take advantage of the spaces available at Nunemaker, including several classrooms and study areas, a kitchen, comfortable lounges, and wireless Internet access. Honors advisors are regularly available to meet with students throughout the year, and the center is open most days and evenings.