

Honors Program FAQ

If you have knowledge, let others light their candles at it. – Margaret Fuller

Who Are Florida Southern's Honors Students?

Honors students generally represent the top ten percent of their class and have either a **1260** minimum combined score on the SAT (or a minimum composite score of 28 on the ACT) OR an un-weighted high school GPA of **3.75** or higher. In cases of exceptional "borderline" students with strong scholastic potential, aptitude, and ambition, the Honors Program director may also consider factors such as extracurricular activity, National Merit status, and other signs of excellence.

Can a current FSC student become an honors student? What about transfer students?

Students may also apply to the Honors Program during their first year. In addition to having a minimum 3.5 GPA, students will be required to write and submit an essay in which they explain their interest in becoming part of the Honors Program. Transfer students may also be eligible for the Honors Program on a case-by-case basis, particularly if they were honors students at their previous schools.

What do honors students need to do to stay in the program?

Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.5. Students whose GPAs fall below a 3.5 may still complete the core honors courses to meet their General Education requirements, but they will not be eligible to graduate with "Honors" on their transcripts. Students are still strongly encouraged to continue working on projects and to pursue honors options within their majors.

What are some of the tangible benefits of being an honors student?

The Honors Program is focused on supporting bright, highly-motivated students and on helping them find ways to succeed, whether through the physical amenities provided, or by helping them take what they are learning to the next level. Tangible benefits include:

- Specialized opportunities for service learning and community outreach
- Permission to take up to twenty credit hours per semester with no additional tuition fees.
- Priority registration for classes
- Eligible for the FCHC Dr. Richard Piper Scholarship (nominated by Director, \$1000)
- Invitation to apply for student grants of up to \$1000 for thesis preparation, travel expenses, and research
- Qualified students in the Honors Program may take part in the FSC Honors Program – USF College of Medicine Medical Education Program. If Program qualifications are met, students receive priority admission to the University of South Florida College of Medicine
- Internship opportunities
- Honors Housing (optional)
- Honors Lounge on campus (coming in Spring 2011)

Do Honors Courses meet Gen Ed requirements in the new curriculum?

Yes. After completing HON 1173, HON 1174, HON 2285, and HON 2286, students need only to take two hours of Personal Wellness and a four-hour course that meets the Quantitative Analysis SLO.

What courses are Honors Students required to take? What does a four year plan for an honors student look like?

During their first two years, students will take four classes, one per semester. Class sizes vary, but students should expect to be challenged and engaged by a wide variety of topics.

HON 1173 (How We Live) Six hours. Honors students will explore how humans interact with the physical environment while influenced by political and scientific endeavors and the unique qualities of the natural environment. Practical applications of theory will be emphasized in a laboratory component.

Gen Ed: NW, Q1

HON 1174 (What We Think) Six hours. Honors students will explore how the great ideas helped shape the various periods of Western culture and in turn were shaped by them. To what extent have they been consistent down through the ages, and in what ways have they evolved or been modified?

Gen Ed: MV, SW (Glb, Aw), EC-A & B

HON 2285 (When We Appreciate) Four hours. Honors students will attend exhibitions and performances in music, art, architecture, theatre, and the *belles-lettres*, as they increase their understanding of the arts.

Gen Ed: FA (In)

HON 2286 (Why We're Here) Four hours. This course is designed to engage FSC Honors students in the study and appreciation of cultural diversity and the struggles for justice inherent in that diversity as explored through a wide variety of disciplines.

Gen Ed: SW (An, Ap), EC-C

HON 3XXX HONORS OPTION COURSE, Four hours, Junior Year

A student may add an Honors option to a non-Honors course for Honors credit. The Honors Program at Florida Southern College has instituted this policy in order to provide opportunities for highly motivated students to participate in unique educational experiences not otherwise available through regular course offerings, such as a collaborative project between a student and a faculty member. The Honors Option requires a written contract between student and sponsoring faculty member. The contract and sponsoring faculty member must receive approval from the Honors Program Committee. The Honors Option is not available for freshman or for courses that have Honors equivalents. Students should not take more than one Honors Options per semester and are limited to three during their career.

HON 4495/4496 HONORS SENIOR THESIS, Senior Year

Six hours distributed over 2 semesters. A two-semester sequence required of all Honors Program students. Restricted to seniors in the Honors Program.

Seniors must have a cumulative 3.5 GPA and have completed at least half of their coursework at FSC. Students in the sequence will work with the professor teaching the course on research projects centered on a particular theme.

What is an Honors Thesis?

Honors projects and theses will vary tremendously from student to student. Students who major in the humanities may elect to create essays between 40-70 pages (not including annotated bibliography, visual aids, or other notes). Students in the creative and performing arts may compile projects and exhibits (poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, screenplays, photography, visual arts, and multimedia), but will also include a written essay component (artist's statement, explanation and justification of the project, annotated bibliography). Theses by students whose focus is in the sciences or social sciences would include a lab or field research element, and will be modeled after scholarly articles in the students' fields.

What do honors students do during their junior year?

We are currently re-structuring this portion of FSC's Honors Program to offer a variety of options. One new program will be the **"Junior to Junior" Program**. During the spring semester of their junior year, Honors students may choose to be paired with talented local high school juniors to complete a service-learning outreach project. FSC students may complete this project in addition to or in place of the preparation courses for their senior theses. Credit hours during junior year (in the near future) will be flexible, tailored to the individual needs of each student. Those who, for instance, wish to take a research-intensive workshop, may elect not to participate for credit in the Junior to Junior Program.

Who teaches honors courses?

You can! Any faculty member may submit an idea for an honors seminar to the Honors Committee for consideration. All courses offered through the Honors Program must still contain the necessary SLOs to meet Gen Ed requirements, but we would like to include a wide variety of rotating topics and themes within the courses in the Honors Program curriculum. The Honors Program is eager to include as many FSC faculty members and disciplines as possible.

What does "honorizing" a class mean?

An "honorized" class is a regularly scheduled class taken for honors credit. Students will work with faculty members who are able and willing to supervise these unique educational experiences not otherwise available through regular course offerings. Advance approval from the Honors Committee is required for this option. The faculty member and the student must prepare a proposal outlining the prospective project. In order to earn honors credit for the course, the student must earn at least an "A" or a "B" in the course, including the project.

What is the difference between "honors" and "honors in the major?"

The term "Graduating with Honors" is reserved for students who have successfully completed the entire Honors Program curriculum along with a cumulative GPA of a 3.5 at the time of graduation. This achievement will be noted on both the diploma and the official transcripts. Many departments also offer honors within the major, including accounting, biochemistry and molecular biology, chemistry, English, history, music, philosophy, political science, psychology, and religion. Generally, students who earn honors in their major conduct an in-depth investigation of an area of interest in collaboration with a professor with expertise in that area. Students must apply for honors within their major no later than the third semester prior to graduation. Working under a qualified professor, students will prepare a major paper, project, or presentation for inclusion in the Fiat Lux Showcase during their final semester. The students' transcripts will indicate that they took an honors course within their major.