



# **University Honors Program Handbook**

**2025-2026**

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## I. Introduction

Founded as the Scholars Program in 1981 and renamed the University Honors Program (UHP) in 1997, the UHP was designed to provide highly motivated and academically accomplished students at Auburn University at Montgomery an opportunity to develop their intellectual interests and skills beyond the typical experience of college students. For more on our history, see <https://www.aum.edu/academics/university-honors-program/history/>

### A. Mission and Goals

The Honors Program at AUM is open to qualified undergraduate students in any major.

#### VISION:

The University Honors Program is the academic unit at Auburn University at Montgomery that

- engages highly motivated and high-achieving undergraduate students from every undergraduate major.
- innovates in curriculum design and development, particularly in interdisciplinary and experiential education.
- exemplifies teaching excellence from diverse fields and using a variety of methods.
- prepares students to thrive as contributing global citizens who strive to understand the perspectives of others.
- creates a community of faculty and students engaged in rigorous intellectual and service-learning experiences.
- graduates students who become engaged alumni with a life-long interest in and a personal connection to AUM.

**MISSION:** Since 1981, the mission of the University Honors Program has been to serve highly motivated students from all of Auburn Montgomery's academic colleges by facilitating their participation in a diverse community that will prepare them intellectually and socially for the challenges and responsibilities of global citizenship now and in their futures.

### B. Core Values and Learning Outcomes

To accomplish our mission, the UHP enhances the college experience of Honors Program students by engaging them in the development and demonstration of our core values: **creative and critical thinking** and **teamwork and leadership** in a context of **global citizenship**.

The UHP values learning outcomes based on our core values were adapted from the Association of American Colleges and Universities VALUE rubrics (<https://www.aacu.org/value>).

- 1) Honors students will develop as **creative thinkers** who
  - combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and
  - think, react, and work in an imaginative way characterized by a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking.

- 2) Honors students will develop **as critical thinkers** who demonstrate habits of mind characterized by the comprehensive and systematic exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.
- 3) Honors students will develop as **global citizens** who continually
  - become more informed, open-minded, and responsible people who are attentive to diversity across the spectrum of differences;
  - seek to understand how their actions affect both **local** and **global** communities; and
  - address the world's most pressing and enduring issues collaboratively and equitably
- 4) Honors students will develop as highly effective **teammates and leaders** who excel in
  - the effort they put into team tasks,
  - their manner of interacting with others on the team, and
  - the quantity and quality of contributions they make to the team.

### C. Admission

#### 1. First-Year Students

Any student admitted to AUM may apply to participate in the UHP. Generally, Honors students at AUM meet the following criteria of a 25 or higher on the ACT and a 3.5 or higher on the high school GPA, but the admissions decision is based on a review of

- academic accomplishments (e.g., GPA, ACT)
- two essays in response to prompts, and
- an interview with current UHP students, faculty, or staff.

#### 2. Transfer or Current AUM Students

Students who have earned a college GPA of at least 3.4 may apply for admission to the UHP. These students will submit an essay (reviewed and rated by faculty) and participate in an interview conducted by current UHP students, faculty, or staff.

Transfer and continuing AUM applicants should have at least four semesters remaining at AUM at the time of their application to ensure they can fulfill the requirements and experience the benefits of the University Honors Program.

## II. UHP Requirements of Participation

### A. General

Members of the UHP are expected to represent AUM, the University Honors Program, and the AUM Honors Assembly in an exemplary manner.

Benefits of the University Honors Program include the privilege of access to the Honors Study Lounge, priority registration, a diverse community of academically motivated and accomplished students, opportunities for domestic and international travel, and participation in a variety of service and social events. Honors students are given the responsibility of maintaining the Honors Study Lounge with a sense of pride and ownership.

To remain in good standing with the UHP, students must make reasonable progress towards University or Warhawk Honors, maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.4, accumulate 60 points per

semester, and participate in the activities of the University Honors Program. Of the twelve service hours, at least eight should come from UHP and/or AUM projects unless permission is given by the Director to direct your service towards other specific goals.

Students who do not remain in good standing because of GPA, service/points, or participation requirements are given a semester of probation during which they may return to good standing. During probationary semesters, students will be advised on necessary requirements, which may include enrollment in at least one Honors course (or complete a course contract) and participation in UHP and service activities but may not include eligibility for travel or other privileges of the UHP.

Students must earn a grade of “B” or better in any HONR or course with an Honors contract to earn credit towards the Honors designations.

## B. Honors Point System

Purpose: The purpose of this change is to promote Honors students to be actively engaged in campus life, to allow for flexibility in the way our students complete their requirements, and to encourage students to seek out leadership positions.

Report your points throughout the semester at this [link](#) or QR code.  
Students need to earn 60 Honors Points to remain in good standing each semester.



*This change was approved at the 2023 Honors Convocation on Thursday August 21, 2023.*

### Methods for Earning Honors Points

Required Points per semester: **60\***

Activity	Obtained Points
1 Service Hour***	5 points each
Serving on the Executive Council	60 points per semester
Food Pantry Committee Chair	40 points per semester
Other Honors Committee Chair	30 points per semester
Serving on an Honors Committee	20 points per semester
Successful Thesis Defense	20 points
Presenting Research/Creative Activity	15 points each presentation
Participating in another Organization's Leadership	15 points per semester
Attending Honors Convocation or Graduation Ceremony	10 points
Chancellor's Cup	6 points per day

Attending Assemblies/Honors Events	5 points each
Attending Campus Events	3 points each

- \* *Deichbelmann Scholarship awardees must complete all of their points from service to satisfy scholarship requirements.*
- \*\* *Established committees are committees with regular operations (ex: Food Pantry). Non-Established committees are committees that are being developed/proposed (Academic Committee).*
- \*\*\* *At least 15 points must come from service hours.*

### III. UHP Curriculum

Honors students have the privilege of greater flexibility than non-honors students in satisfying their AUM Core Curriculum requirements, so they are encouraged to meet with Honors advisors regularly as well as meeting with their advisors in their majors. Honors students and their advisors are encouraged to direct questions about Honors courses and how they count towards the AUM Core Curriculum to the honors advisor or honors director.

Students may substitute Honors colloquia (HONR 1957) and seminars (HONR 1757, 1857, 2757, 3757) for courses that satisfy Area II or Area IV requirements in the AUM Core Curriculum or as free electives.

	<i>Semester Hours</i>
HONR 1757 (Honors equivalent of ENGL 1010) .....	3
HONR 1857 (Honors equivalent of ENGL 1020) .....	3
HONR 1957* (may be taken up to three times) .....	3
HONR 2757* (may be taken up to six times).....	3
HONR 3757* (may be taken up to two times) .....	3
HONR 3957 (may not be repeated for credit).....	3
HONR 4957(may be taken up to two times) .....	3

#### Seminars

Honors students who enter as freshmen are expected to take HONR 1757 in the fall and HONR 1857 in the spring semester of their first year. These courses substitute for ENGL 1010 and 1020 respectively, satisfying Area I of the AUM Core Curriculum. Freshman Honors students who have already met the ENGL 1010/1020 requirements when they enroll at AUM may use HONR 1757 and 1857 to satisfy Area II or Area IV requirements instead. Those entering AUM with credit for HONR 1757 and 1857 may also consider enrolling in HONR 2757.

Seminars HONR 2757 and HONR 3757 are repeatable, that is they may be taken more than once for credit as long as course content differs.

#### Colloquia

HONR 1957 is a one-hour, repeatable course graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory (S or U). Course topics differ each semester. Colloquia may be scheduled to meet once a week for 50 minutes, every other week for 100 minutes, or every third week for 150 minutes, depending on the schedule that

works best for the course topic and activities planned. During summer semesters, class periods will be longer as with all summer classes

### Departmental Honors Courses

Honors versions of courses that count towards core requirements are designated with a “7” as the final digit of the course number (e.g., BIOL 1017, COMM 1017, PHIL 2007). These courses may also be used to satisfy AUM Core Curriculum requirements.

### Honors Contracts

Any student may use Honors course contracts to fulfill Honors course requirements with the approval of the Honors Director. For more information on Honors course contracts, see the website.

### Typical Honors Schedule

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
<b>Freshmen (First-Year)</b>	UNIV 1007 HONR 1757 <i>First-Year Seminar</i>	HONR 1857 <i>First-Year Seminar</i>
<b>Sophomore</b>	HONR 2757 <i>Sophomore Seminar</i>	HONR 2757 <i>Sophomore Seminar</i>
<b>Junior</b>	HONR 3757 <i>Junior Seminar</i>	HONR 3757 <i>Junior Seminar</i>
<b>Senior</b>	HONR 3957 <i>Thesis Proposal</i>	HONR 4957 <i>Thesis</i>

*Three sections of HONR 1957 Honors Colloquium (1 hour) may be taken in any semesters that they fit the student's schedule.*

### A. Warhawk Honors

UHP students may earn Warhawk Honors by completing 15 semester hours of Honors credit, which may include HONR courses (colloquia or seminar), honors contracts, or honors sections of courses (e.g., BIOL 1027) with a “B” or better in each course. To earn Warhawk Honors, students must also have completed required service (12 hours/semester) and have earned a 3.4 GPA or higher. No thesis is required.

The designation “Warhawk Honors” is listed on the transcripts and diploma. At graduation, those Honors student earning Warhawk Honors wear orange and white honors cords.

### B. University Honors

The highest honor conferred by the UHP is University Honors, earned by students who qualify for Warhawk Honors and complete the Honors thesis.

	<i>Semester Hours</i>
HONR 3957 <i>Honors Research (may not be repeated for credit)</i> .....	3
HONR 4957 <i>Honors Thesis (may be taken up to two times)</i> .....	3

The designation “University Honors” is listed in the graduation program, on transcripts and on the diploma. At graduation, graduating student earning University Honors wear orange and white honors cords and a UHP medallion.

## IV. Honors Courses (HONR)

### A. Honors Seminars

HONR 1757, HONR 1857, HONR 2757, and HONR 3757 are interdisciplinary courses that are the heart of the Honors curriculum. Seminars comprising the University Honors Program include the learning outcomes mentioned previously. Topics and assignments vary depending upon the professor(s) who teach them, but some texts and themes are consistently employed:

Year 1	Fall	HONR 1757 <b>The Hero's Journey</b>	Challenges students to consider the idea of the heroic and their journeys, especially as it pertains to their own lives, to their education, and to the time they will spend at AUM. Special emphasis is placed on <b>the nature and value of education</b> and the question "what does it mean to be an educated person?" Readings may include <i>How to Think</i> , <i>The Apology of Socrates</i> , <i>1984</i> , <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> , and <i>Brave New World</i> . UNIV 1007 may also include discussions of some of those works.
	Spring	HONR 1857 <b>Being Human</b>	Uses a diverse set of readings from the humanities and sciences to encourage students to think through <b>what it means to be a human being</b> , in the broadest sense of the phrase.
Year 2	Fall	HONR 2757 <b>The Problem of Other People</b>	This course often employs Plato's famous treatise on the well-ordered society, <i>The Republic</i> . Issues to be discussed may include the nature of law, controversial social issues, or any other aspect of the challenges posed by our desire to live in society with our fellow human beings.
	Spring	HONR 2757 <b>Seeing the Unseen</b>	Much of what we believe, from the mundane to the cosmically significant, is based on considerations not immediately accessible by our senses: memories, the testimony of others, logical inferences, etc. This course asks students to consider the details, merits, and implications of some of these beliefs. Charles Darwin's <i>On the Origin of Species</i> is sometimes used, as a whole or by use of selected excerpts.
Year 3	Fall	HONR 3757 <b>Research Seminar</b>	The theme of this course, and the readings that are required, is determined entirely by the professors who teach the course (with approval from the Honors Committee). It must include a substantive <b>applied research project</b> , preferably with the opportunity for students to connect their research to their major field of study or to a substantial service project to be completed in the spring HONR 3757.
	Spring	HONR 3757 <b>Challenging the Process</b>	This course focuses on the nature of leadership and the cultivation of leadership skills, in whatever domain(s) the faculty teaching the course choose to emphasize. Students work in teams to design a proposal for a <b>substantive service project</b> , with the intention that one or more of the proposals will be implemented with the help of other Honors students.

### B. Honors Colloquia: HONR 1957

The Honors colloquium is a one-credit hour course in which students are graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Topics and themes vary with each offering. Students are expected to take the colloquium course three times and are strongly encouraged to choose a diversity of emphases.

**C. Honors Special Topics: HONR 1997, 2997, 3997, 4997**

Honors faculty may occasionally design and teach special topics courses. These elective courses count toward graduation credit hour requirements and/or toward Honors credit hour requirements. Topics and themes vary with each offering.

**D. Honors Research and Thesis: HONR 3957, 4957**

To graduate with full University Honors, a student must complete and successfully defend an honors thesis project. We recommend that students enroll in HONR 3957 in the spring of the junior year and HONR 4957 in the fall of the senior year. Throughout their college careers, students are encouraged to think about areas of interest within their majors and to get to know faculty in their majors so that they can identify a research mentor for the Honors thesis.

**E. Honors Courses by Departments**

Honors courses offered by various departments are designated by a four-digit number ending with a “7” for lecturer courses or “8” for labs. Currently, academic departments at AUM offer these Honors courses:

**F. Honors Courses by Contract**

An Honors contract allows students in the University Honors Program to earn Honors credit in a non-honors course. Typically, students completing an Honors contract engage in a substantive project or presentation complementing the content of the course in which they are enrolled. These projects typically take about 15 hours or 1 hour per week of the semester. See the [Guide to Honors Contracts](#).

**V. Awards**

**A. Aya Zaied Honors Leadership and Service Award**

This award honors the contributions of alumna Aya Zaied (2011) to AUM and the University Honors Program.

This award is given to students who demonstrate service to the program, the university, and to the community; who have demonstrated commitment to the ideals of excellence; and who have a documented record of leadership, particularly in the area of service to others. Aya Zaied Honors Leadership and Service Award winners are typically seniors.

An annual call for nominations will be sent to all members of the Honors Assembly. Those nominations will be reviewed by the Director and Program Coordinator, in consultation with members of the Executive Council of the Honors Assembly (excluding anyone nominated or whose spouse or family member is nominated).

**Aya Zaied Leadership and Service Award Winners**

2012  
2013  
2014

Ying Huo  
Alex Trott  
Sonni Gunnels

2015	<i>Not awarded</i>
2016	<i>Not awarded</i>
2017	<i>Not awarded</i>
2018	Allison Stewart
2019	Elizabeth Meads
2020	Allison Stewart
2021	Joanna Sumner
2022	Hadassah Gaddis, Hannah Mills
2023	Logann Shorter
2024	Alex Ennis
2025	Hailey Whitlock

## **B. Donald G. Nobles Award for Academic Excellence**

At the Fall Honors Convocation, all active Honors students are recognized who earned a 3.8 or higher in both fall and spring semester of the previous academic year.

## **C. Honors Program Travel Grants**

The University Honors Program sometimes has a modest amount of funds available to support university-sponsored student travel. Awards range from \$250 to \$2,000, depending upon the availability of funds and student need.

## **D. Honors Scholarship for Research or Creative Activity**

Students who need assistance paying for travel costs associated with an academic conference, conference registration fees, materials required for research purposes, or other opportunities related to their major fields of study may apply for this scholarship. Award amounts vary in accordance with available funds and student need.

# **VI. Honors Assembly**

The Honors Assembly is a student organization comprising all active participants in the UHP. The Honors Assembly was chartered in July 2011 and first elected officers in August of that year.

See the Honors Assembly Constitution and Bylaws for more information.

<b>Year</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
2011-2012	Graydon Rust	Justin Dayvolt	Aya Zaied	
2012-2013	Alex Trott	Kelhi DePace	Jordan Price (Jan.- Aug.) Caitlyn Williams (Aug.- Dec.)	
2013-2014	Alex Trott	Sonni Gunnels	Kelhi DePace	
2014-2015	Alex Trott	Sonni Gunnels	Kelhi DePace	
2015-2016	Garrett Herring	Ameer Bedwan	Jake Sustarich	
2016	Jake Sustarich	Ameer Bedwan	Rachel Pate	
2017	Rachel Pate	Jasmine Boutdy	Safa Kazi	

2018	Brennan Herring	Nick Ayers	Meaghan DePace	
2019	Elizabeth Meads	John Forrest	Graeme DePace	
2020	John Forrest	Hannah Mills	Dakota Mills (Secretary of Interior)*	J.P. Lemire (Secretary of Exterior)
2021-2022	Claire Culp	Brennan DePace	Diondus Williams (Secretary of Interior)	Mary Kate Lackey (Secretary of Exterior)
2022-2023	Alex Ennis	Bella Soto	Alexis Stafford	Anna Amissah
2023-2024	Alex Ennis	Kynard Atkins Bella Soto	Alexis Stafford	Chris Web
2024-2025	Bella Soto	Sarah Paterson	Rose Statam	Madison Cole
2025-2026	Larry Davis	Seth Grogan	Emily Mason	Cole Williams

*\*We changed the Constitution to add a second secretary in 2020 but made a change again in 2022 to replace that secretary with a treasurer because we needed the office to apply for and oversee appropriations from Student Leadership & Involvement.*

## VII. Honors Committee and Faculty

### A. Honors Committee

The University Honors Committee is a sub-committee of the Faculty Senate that consists of one faculty member from each College and the Library and the Director of the Honors Program. In addition, the Honors Committee includes the following ex-officio members: the Provost or designee, the Director of Composition, and the Chair of the Curriculum Committee. Honors students are represented by the officers (President, Vice President, and Secretaries) of the Honors Assembly.

By Faculty Senate resolution, the Director serves as Co-chair, and another Co-chair is selected by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee from among faculty membership on the Committee.

Name	Representing	Term Ends
Tara Beziat	College of Education	2026
Tim Bailey	Library	2026
Courtney Bagents Cochran	College of Nursing & Health Sciences	2027
Seth Reno, Co-chair	College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences	2027
Bill Lyle	College of Business	2027
Jessica Bodily	College of the Sciences	2027
<b>Ex-Officio, Non-voting</b>		
Elizabeth Burrows	Interim Director of Composition	NA
Matt Ragland	Chair, Curriculum Committee Chair Office of the Provost	2021
Jackie Hall	UHP Coordinator, <i>ex officio</i> , non-voting	NA
Lynn Stallings, Co-chair	Honors Program Director	NA
<b>Student Representatives, Non-voting</b>		

Larry Davis	President, Honors Assembly	2026
Cole Williams	Vice President, Honors Assembly	2026
Emily Mason	Secretary, Honors Assembly	2026
Seth Grogan	Treasurer, Honors Assembly	2026

## B. Honors Faculty

Faculty are designated as Honors faculty for three-year terms beginning in the semester in which they teach an Honors course. These faculty members are encouraged to include the word *Honors* in their titles for a three-year term.

Tracey Bark	Associate Professor of Political Science & Public Administration	Fall 2029
Dana Bice	Adjunct Professor of Art History	Fall 2027
Kimberly Brackett	Professor of Sociology	Fall 2026
Elizabeth Burrows	Distinguished Senior Lecturer of English	Summer 2028
Feltmate, David	Professor of Religious Studies	Fall 2029
Darren Harris-Fain	Professor of English	Summer 2027
Jessica Hayes	Librarian III	Fall 2026
Pia Knigge	Assistant Professor of Political Science	Fall 2026
Brett Lehman	Associate Professor of Sociology	Fall 2028
Christin LeJeune	Director of Central Advising	Fall 2028
Amy Locklear	Distinguished Senior Lecturer of English	Summer 2026
Samantha McNeilly	Librarian II	Summer 2028
Seth Reno	Distinguished Associate Professor	Summer 2026
Jason Shifferd	Senior Lecturer of English	Fall 2029
Lynn Stallings	Professor of Mathematics Education	Fall 2029
Heather Witcher	Associate Professor of English	Fall 2026