The College at Brockport Honors Program
Frequently Asked Questions

**How does academic advisement work in the Honors Program?**

For entering freshmen, academic advisement is provided in “Introduction to Honors” HON 112 (4 cr). The course satisfies the College’s General Education requirements for Written Communication, Oral Communication (Y), Diversity (D), and Perspectives on Women (W) as well as academic planning (APS). The HON 112 instructor serves as the Honors student’s academic advisor for the first semester at Brockport and continues in that role until s/he declares a major, upon which s/he is assigned a new academic advisor from their major.

Transfer students are assigned a major advisor upon enrolling at Brockport and declaring their major. In addition to having an academic major advisor, Honors students are advised by the Honors Program directors, Dr. Donna Kowal (219 Holmes, dkowal@brockport.edu) and Dr. Priya Banerjee (219 Holmes, pbanerje@brockport.edu). The directors are available throughout the year to offer guidance on program requirements and opportunities, while a faculty advisor from the academic major department provides guidance on major-specific course and career/graduate school planning.

Honors Peer Mentors serve as secondary advisors, helping new students navigate both college academics and campus life. For general questions, students may be able to get the information they need from Ms. Darlene Waters, Honors Program Secretary (219 Holmes, dwaters@brockport.edu, 395-5400).

**Do Honors students have early registration privileges?**

Yes! Each semester, Honors students have the opportunity to register for courses earlier than most other students on campus—regardless of class status, Honors student may register on the first day of open registration. Students should meet with their advisor(s) as early as possible during the advisement/registration period in order to take advantage of early registration privileges and plan an appropriate course of study. Pay attention to email messages and Facebook posts from the Honors Program directors for important announcements about advisement and course registration.

**What are the course requirements for the Honors Program?**

Honors students must fulfill The College at Brockport’s requirements in General Education, Honors Program course requirements, and their specific academic major(s)/minor(s). Because most Honors courses satisfy Gen. Ed. requirements and/or major electives, completing the program will not result in a later graduation date. Honors students are expected to take at least one Honors course per year and maintain a 3.25 GPA to remain active in the Honors Program. The capstone experience of the program is a senior thesis project that results in a major research paper (or artistic equivalent) and a public presentation at Scholar’s Day (or another academic conference).
**TRACK I (Lower-division): 4 HONORS COURSES**

*(For those who enter the Honors Program as freshmen)*

- Four Honors courses are required during the first 4-5 semesters of college. One course out of every five, or roughly one course per semester, needs to be an Honors course during the freshman and sophomore years.
- In addition to HON 112 (required for all freshman Honors students), freshman Honors students are required to take 3 additional Honors courses (9-12 credits). Students select these courses from a variety of disciplines that satisfy additional lower division General Education requirements. For example, Honors Environmental Science (ENV 202) fulfills Natural Science with Lab and Honors Improvisational Theater (THE 232) fulfills Fine Arts with Performance.
- If all lower-division General Education requirements have been fulfilled before meeting the required additional 9-12 Honors lower division credits (or in the event of scheduling conflicts), students may satisfy the remaining Honors credit through a lower or upper division Honors Contract. Approval from the Honors director is required for all Honors Contracts (see below).
- Upon completing Track I, students must then complete Track II, upper-division Honors courses, in order to graduate in the Honors Program.

**TRACK II (Upper-division): 3 HONORS COURSES**

*(For those who enter the Program at the mid-point of their undergraduate education, including transfers and for those who began the Program as freshmen and completed Track I)*

In the junior and senior years, Honors students focus on fulfilling their academic major, minor and/or electives. Just 3 Honors courses (a total of 7 credits) are required during the last two years of college:

- Honors Contemporary Issues (3 cr.): An Honors course that satisfies the Contemporary Issues General Education requirement (indicated by an “I”) of the College. Examples of recent Honors Contemporary Issues course titles include: Sex and Culture, Life in the Digital Age, Global Warming, and Professional Ethics. At least three Honors “I” courses are offered every semester, and they are derived from a variety of academic disciplines.
- HON 395 Honors Junior Colloquium (1 cr.): As preparation for the Honors Senior Thesis project (HON 490), this course must be completed during the junior year. The course is designed to guide you through the preliminary work of choosing a thesis topic and director, as well as preparing a formal thesis proposal, which is required to begin HON 490. In some instances, a student may substitute HON 395 with a research methodology course in their major; however, advance approval from the Honors Director is required.
- HON 490 Honors Senior Thesis Project (3 cr.): The capstone experience of the Honors Program is an individual research or creative project, resulting in both a written/creative product and a formal public presentation. Completed under the direction of a professor in an academic major or related area, this course may fulfill a major requirement or elective (contingent upon approval of the Department Chair). Your thesis proposal must be approved by your chosen thesis director within the first 2 weeks of the semester that you are enrolled in HON 490.
What is an Honors Contract—and how can I create one?

An Honors Contract enables you to convert a traditional course (lower- or upper-division) into an Honors course, under the following conditions:

1) The course is in your major and has the potential to enrich your present course of study.
2) The course instructor is willing to work with you to make his or her course a specialized Honors course for you.
3) You have presented a convincing case to the Honors Program Director that the course you have chosen is appropriate and will indeed add value to your current academic course of study.

The point of the Honors Contract is to assist students in customizing and enriching their academic curriculum. (However, the disadvantage of pursuing a contract in lieu of taking a traditional Honors course is that students don’t get the experience of engaging with fellow Honors students in a small class setting.)

To pursue an Honors Contract, a completed contract form (available in the Honors Lounge display case) must be submitted and approved by both the course instructor and the Honors Director within the first 2 weeks of the semester you are enrolled in the course.

How do my academic performance and course credits affect my status in the Honors Program and my scholarship(s)?

Honor students are expected maintain a 3.25 GPA to remain active in the Honors Program. The program does not require a minimum number of credits earned for each academic year—some of our students attend college part-time.

Students receiving scholarships may be subject to a higher GPA, along with requirements for a minimum number of credits per academic year. In order for all scholarship recipients to maintain their scholarship, it is absolutely essential for them to be full-time students (minimum 12 credits)—and many scholarships require that the recipient complete 30 credits each academic year. Since each scholarship has different requirements, it is a good idea to consult with the Scholarship Office. For information about the Honors Scholarship, contact Adam Standish at astandis@brockport.edu. For other scholarships, contact Kim Ehret at kehret@brockport.edu.

Where is the Honors Student Lounge and what will I find there?

One of the privileges of being an Honors student includes the exclusive use of the Honors Student Lounge, located in Holmes Hall (room 218). It is open from 8 am – 4 pm Monday-Friday, and includes computer stations and spaces to study or just hang out. In order to use the Honors Lounge after hours (i.e. after 4:00 pm), please book it well in advance with Ms. Darlene Waters, Honors Program Secretary, (585) 395-5400, dwaters@brockport.edu.
When using the lounge, please be mindful of the other students in the room, who may be studying or working on a research project. Avoid lengthy cell-phone conversations. Also, keep the lounge clean and free of clutter at all times. Leave no trace!

**What is the Honors Club and how can I get involved?**

The Honors Club is a student-run BSG affiliated organization that represents the interests of Honors students. In addition, according to the club’s constitution, “The purpose of the Honors Club [is] to sponsor and promote programs and events that benefit the Brockport academic community, address issues of current concern, and stimulate personal achievement in both students and faculty. Honors Club activities [are] governed by a strong commitment to create a true learning environment on the Brockport campus through personal involvement and the interchange of ideas.”

Each year the following Honors Club officers are elected by Honors Program members: President, Vice President (President-elect), Treasurer, Secretary Freshman Representative (3 positions), Sophomore Representative (2 positions), Junior Representative (2 positions), Senior Representative (2 positions), and Transfer Representative. Other officer positions may be established as needed on an ad hoc basis. All Honors Club officers must be enrolled least six (6) credit hours per semester during the tenure of their office and be in good academic standing.

All Honors students are welcome to attend Honors Club meetings and participate in the events and activities held throughout the year.

**Are there opportunities for study abroad, internship, conference presentations, and the like associated with the Honors Program?**

Yes! Pay attention to email messages and Facebook postings from the directors to find out about outside-the-classroom learning opportunities for Honors students. Also, read *The Promethean*, our award-winning Honors newsletter.