

The Honors Program

Student Handbook

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Baylor University

HONORS COLLEGE
Honors Program

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PART ONE: The Honors Program

§ 1. Purpose

The Honors Program, established in 1959, is designed to enhance and enrich the academic experiences of talented, highly motivated students at Baylor University. The program can supplement academic degrees and majors in all departments and schools of the University; it offers more challenging classes, encourages interdisciplinary approaches to learning, and provides opportunities for students to pursue independent study and research with individual faculty mentors. Honors students, through their shared activities and dedication to academic excellence, become a community of scholars that builds connections between specialized fields of inquiry and that reinforces Baylor's commitment to the ethical application of knowledge.

§ 2. Administration

The Honors Program is one of the four academic units that constitute Baylor's Honors College and is housed in Suite 203 of Morrison Hall. A directory of the program's faculty and staff can be found online at <http://www.baylor.edu/honorsprogram/facultystaff>.

§ 3. Applicant Profile

The Honors Program welcomes applications from highly qualified and motivated incoming Baylor students. Recent Honors Program freshman classes averaged around 1450 on the SAT/32 on the ACT, and most in this group were top-10% high school graduates. In addition to these numerical measures, we especially value applications that testify to the applicants' desire to participate in the communal life of scholarship and service, to ground themselves in great works inside and outside of their principal fields of interest, and to engage fellow students and faculty members in developing research projects that may set the stage for further study. We highly regard applicants who are keenly motivated to contribute to a program that can, in turn, nourish their experiences in any number of the academy's disciplines and in their work in the world.

§ 4. Communication

The Honors Program communicates with its students primarily via Baylor email. Honors students should verify the accuracy of the email addresses on file in the Honors Program office. Each Honors student should also ensure that the program's administrative office has on file an accurate local mailing address and phone number. Please carefully read all email communication sent to you from our office.

PART TWO: Program Structure and Policies

§ 1. Application and Admission

A. Admission Opportunities for Incoming Freshmen

Most participating students enter the Honors Program as incoming freshmen. The application process is simple: upon applying to Baylor, students are invited to also apply to the Honors Program through an electronic application available via *goBaylor* or at: <http://www.baylor.edu/honorscollege/apply>. Admissions decisions are made on a rolling basis throughout the fall and spring semesters for admission the following fall. Students who complete and submit their application early, i.e., during the fall of their senior year of high school, will stand a better chance of gaining a spot in the program than those who apply later. Incomplete applications, or applications submitted by candidates not accepted into the university, will not be considered.

Prior to beginning their Honors studies, incoming students admitted into the Honors Program must be advised by program personnel, usually ahead of one of the university's summer orientation sessions. These advisement meetings will introduce students to curricular requirements and to opportunities available to them through the program; and students will also be advised specifically about their first-semester coursework, including any required Honors classes. Admitted Honors Program students will also receive instructions for participating in the Freshman Reading Project—an important opportunity and requirement for incoming students to engage and discuss, in the context of community, a common text. (See Part Three, §2, below.)

Students who enter the program as first-semester freshmen must also attend an orientation assembly held for incoming Honors students during the first two weeks of classes in the fall term. Information about this large-group orientation meeting will be provided via Baylor email to each new Honors student.

B. Other Opportunities for Admission

FRESHMAN YEAR: Entering undergraduates who have (1) previously applied to the Honors Program or communicated with admission staff, and (2) earned a 3.6 or better grade-point average after their first semester, will be invited to apply for entry into the Honors Program, effective in the spring semester of their first year. Such invitations are distributed through Baylor email during the Christmas break. Interested students must follow instructions for returning their completed applications before spring classes begin in January. Those accepted into the program will be advised by program staff about required Honors coursework and will make any necessary schedule adjustments by the end of the first week of spring classes. (For the slightly modified requirements for students entering the Honors Program during the second semester in residence, see Part Two, §5.D, below.)

PRIOR TO THE START OF THE JUNIOR YEAR: The other potential point of entry into the Honors Program is any time prior the first semester of the junior year. An undergraduate who has earned a cumulative GPA of 3.6 or above at Baylor should contact the Assistant Director of the Honors Program to schedule a meeting to discuss the opportunities and requirements of the Honors Program. Prospective

students must usually have four or more remaining semesters at Baylor to provide adequate time to complete Departmental Honors. Requests to join the Honors Program during or later than the start of the junior year will be considered on a case-by-case basis; such admittances are exceedingly rare.

Upon meeting with the Assistant Director, the prospective student will be required to apply. At the program's discretion, letters of recommendation from Baylor faculty may also be required. Applicants who are accepted in this manner will be advised about coursework for the following term. Those students who complete the final two years of the program are accorded, upon graduating, the distinction of "Departmental Honors." (See Part Two, §8, below.)

TRANSFER STUDENTS: Students who transfer to Baylor University from another college are generally asked to complete a semester at Baylor University before applying to the Honors Program. To complete the Honors thesis and other program requirements, these students should be prepared to spend at least three years as an undergraduate at Baylor. A first-semester Baylor GPA of 3.6 or better is required for these transfer admissions.

§ 2. Good Standing in the Program

Students in the program, by dint of their "Honors" designation, are expected to maintain high academic standards. However, during the first three semesters of the program, self-selection is the norm for how an Honors student's grade point average affects his continued participation in the program. So long as the student fulfills all specific requirements of the Honors curriculum (as discussed in this Handbook and elsewhere), makes satisfactory progress toward the degree, and meets other standards herein described (and always at the discretion of the directors), the student may be considered in good standing and is free to continue to participate in the program.

GPA PROGRESSION STANDARD: A GPA check will be undertaken when students complete the transition from H2 to H3 as noted on their Honors file, typically after the spring semester of the sophomore year. At that point, *any Honors student who has not maintained a 3.5 cumulative GPA will be withdrawn from the program.* For such a student to continue, the student with a low GPA may submit a petition that must be approved by a program director. This petition will establish the terms according to which the Honors student must bring the cumulative GPA up to the required level to remain in the program. Failure to do so according to the approved timetable will result in the student's removal from the Honors Program. It should be stressed that merely submitting a petition does not guarantee a student's ability to continue with Honors; petitions will be approved or rejected after review.

A second GPA check will occur after the completion of the third year, and students with a low GPA may be removed from the program at that time.

GPA AND GRADUATION: A student must have a 3.5 GPA to advance to the upper-division requirements, but this is separate from the final GPA required for graduation. To graduate from the Honors Program, a student must have a 3.2 or better cumulative GPA.

GPA AND THE THESIS PROJECT: An Honors student may be precluded from advancing to the thesis project if he or she has a cumulative GPA below 3.5. This is separate from the general requirement for

good standing and graduation and may be dependent on the subject area of the proposed thesis. The GPA requirement is particularly relevant for science theses. In most cases, students with a GPA below 3.5 should not undertake a clinical or lab-based thesis. Students with a GPA below 3.5 who are about to begin the thesis should discuss the project with their Honors advisor.

§ 3. Expectations of Students: Three Statements

The “honor” in the program’s title is not simply a signifier of academic success. Thus, the program expects that:

A: Its students will never cheat or abet cheating on any assignment or examination at Baylor or elsewhere. The Honors Program accordingly expects strict adherence to the University’s Honor Code, and it encourages faculty, staff, and students to abide by the referral system established through the Office of Academic Integrity. Honors students determined to have violated the Honor Code may, upon a thorough review by the program director, be dismissed from the Honors Program.

B: Its students will reveal and cultivate their love of learning through coursework experiences at Baylor. In most cases, Honors Program students should expect to register each semester for at least fifteen total credit hours of coursework, five courses per term being the normal academic load prescribed by the Undergraduate Catalog. But during the junior and senior years, when Honors students must complete the required HON courses (e.g., Colloquium, Advanced Readings, thesis hours), they should expect to carry a sixteen- or seventeen-hour academic load each term. Certain semesters call for exceptions in the form of reduced credit-hours, the term of the MCAT for pre-med students, for instance.

Usually only two (occasionally three) of a student’s courses in any given semester are to be Honors experiences. The “Curricular Requirements” section of this handbook, below, describes in detail the features of the Honors Program curriculum.

C: Its students will demonstrate strong character and appropriate comportment, especially in their interactions with one another and with Baylor faculty and staff. Consequently, the program director reserves the right to dismiss from the Honors Program any student who patently and blatantly disparages another Honors student or a member of Baylor’s faculty or staff.

§ 4. The University’s Disciplines and the Program

One of the virtues of the program is its general flexibility in accommodating Honors students from a variety of academic disciplines. Philosophically, this flexibility stems from our desire for the Honors Program to cultivate a single community of scholars from an array of academic units and with wide-ranging interests and pursuits. Practically, this means that the program is committed to ensuring, whenever possible, that required Honors coursework (especially at the lower-division level) be applicable to most every major and degree plan. The requirements stated below are not exact or exhaustive for all students in the Honors Program, but any curricular modifications for Honors students following such a track will be discussed with them during each semester’s required advising sessions and provided to them through various outlets (e.g., the Undergraduate Catalog, the Honors Program web page). Even in these

specialized situations, the overall shape of the program and its hallmarks will nonetheless remain consistent for all Honors students.

§ 5. Curricular Requirements

A. *Types of “Honors” Courses*

Courses credited toward the Honors Program’s requirements fall into one of two primary categories: (1) courses taken in sections designated as “Honors” on the course schedule for a given term, including upper-division HON courses offered expressly by the Honors Program, or (2) non-Honors courses in which students arrange and complete—with the instructing professor’s consent and oversight—a contract for work that, when completed to the professor’s satisfaction, earns them Honors credit.

1. Designated Honors Courses:

Each designated Honors course (courses from (1), above) may be either an “Honors-only” or a “mixed” or “clustered” Honors section: Honors students constitute the entire class in the former case, whereas in the latter, Honors students are clustered within a larger, non-Honors class and must fulfill modified requirements and/or expectations, usually delineated in an “Honors Requirements” portion of the course syllabus. Registration for all designated Honors courses is limited to Honors Program students. **Note: A grade of D+ or lower will not count towards the Honors units required on a student’s Honors audit.**

2. Non-Honors Courses (Contracts):

A student arranging a contract for Honors credit (category (2), above) must obtain the consent of the pertinent course’s instructor, who must (in addition to listing the supplemental requirements for Honors designation) verify the student’s contract form and agree to evaluate the contracted work. Contract forms are available online, and submission is two-step process (the student first submits the form to the course instructor who, if amenable, submits online verification of that form through a link provided with the form). Deadlines for submission of these forms—usually three weeks after the beginning of classes in the semester during which the work is to be done—will be posted in the program’s office and on its web page. At the end of each semester, Honors Program staff will contact all instructors who are supervising a contract for Honors credit with a link to provide the results of the contract; these professors will then respond with an evaluation of “Honors Credit” or “No Honors Credit” for each supervised student. Those students who successfully complete Honors contracts will earn an “Honors” designation for the contracted course on their permanent transcripts, and their Honors work may count toward their requirements for the program (see subsection immediately below). However, work thus contracted and completed for Honors credit usually has no bearing—for good or for ill—on the student’s grade for the course. Students should complete all contracts in their penultimate semester at Baylor. Contracts in the graduating semester are no longer allowed, as attempting to complete a contract during the final semester may, if the contract is uncompleted or the final grade in the course is too low, preclude graduating from the Honors Program due to a shortage of required Honors units.

Note: The student must complete the regular, non-Honors component of the course with a grade of B or better to receive Honors credit for a contracted course. Failure

to achieve the minimum score on the regular syllabus requirements will lead to no Honors Credit being granted, even if all the contract requirements were otherwise successfully completed.

3. Special Non-Honors Courses:

The following non-Honors courses will count towards the Honors Program requirements in a manner equivalent to a designated Honors course:

- FAS courses offered through the College of Arts and Sciences (three or more credit hours);
- Baylor Business Fellows ECO 1380 and other classes restricted to Business Fellows including a Business Colloquium if offered;
- Independent Study offered by Baylor Honors Program faculty (with contract or Honors course registration);
- Graduate-level classes (5000 or higher) earned prior to the awarding of a bachelor's degree. If a student is enrolled in joint bachelor's/master's degree program, only one graduate-level course may count towards the Honors Program requirements. Any exceptions must be approved by the program director.

B. Standard Honors Curriculum

1. Overview

With some possible variations as approved by program faculty and staff, this standard Honors curriculum applies to most students in the program. (For other approved models, see subsection D, below. Note also §4, above.)

Please note that this curriculum presupposes a four-year degree plan. Honors students aiming to graduate in fewer than four years should consult with their Honors adviser relatively early in their Baylor careers. Some curricular flexibility for such students is possible but by no means automatic.

(see table next page)

	<i>Fall Term</i>	<i>Spring Term</i>
<i>First Year of Study</i>	FYS 1399*: First-Year Seminar (Honors), if possible	GTX 2301: Intellectual Tradition of the Ancient World (Honors)
	Additional Honors unit	Additional Honors unit
<i>Second Year of Study</i>	GTX 2302: Medieval Intellectual Tradition (Honors)	HON 3200: Colloquium I
	Additional Honors unit	Additional Honors unit
<i>Third Year of Study</i>	HON 3100: Advanced Readings & Research I	HON 3101#: Advanced Readings & Research II
	Additional Honors unit (upper level)	Additional Honors unit (upper level)
<i>Fourth Year of Study</i>	HON 4v87; 2 hrs: Honors Thesis	HON 4v87; 2 hrs: Honors Thesis
	Additional Honors unit (upper level)	HON 4088: Honors Exit Interview

Notes:

- * Incoming Honors students for whom an FYS 1399 section is unavailable or inadvisable may meet this requirement by completing some other Honors course (designated or, if necessary, by contract).
- # Honors juniors, especially in the natural and social sciences, will typically be advised to complete Honors 3100 (Advanced Readings & Research I) *no later than* the fall of the junior year and Honors 3101 (Advanced Readings & Research II) *no later than* the following spring.
A second Honors Colloquium, HON 3201, may be taken to satisfy an upper-level Honors unit, but it is not required for graduation.

The total credits required for completing this Honors Program curriculum, then, include both:

1) eleven designated Honors units (13 credit hours) of specifically required Honors courses and the Honors thesis (4 credit hours), consisting of

- | | | |
|---------------|---|-------------------|
| (1) FYS 1399, | First Year Seminar (or equivalent), | 3 Cr Hrs, 1 Unit |
| (2) GTX 2301, | Intellectual Trad. of the Ancient World (Honors), | 3 Cr Hrs, 1 Unit |
| (3) GTX 2302, | Medieval Intellectual Tradition (Honors), | 3 Cr Hrs, 1 Unit |
| (4) HON 3200, | Colloquium I | 2 Cr Hrs, 1 Unit |
| (5) HON 3100, | Advanced Readings & Research I | 1 Cr Hr, 1 Unit |
| (6) HON 3101, | Advanced Readings & Research II | 1 Cr Hr, 1 Unit |
| (7) HON 4088, | Honors Exit Review | 0 Cr Hrs, 1 Unit |
| (8) HON 4V87, | Honors Thesis | 4 Cr Hrs, 4 Units |

2) seven additional Honors units (often the equivalent of 21 credit-hours: see B.3 and C, below).

2. Petitions and Substitution Arrangements for Honors Courses

Depending on the student's major, an Honors First-Year Seminar class (FYS 1399 or equivalent) may or may not count towards the degree requirements for the student's major. Please note that while the Honors Program will make every effort to have the FYS Honors course substituted for another degree-required Baylor course, *the substitution process is nevertheless by petition only* and (as that term implies) is always subject to the judgment of administrators in the relevant academic units. Honors students should be prepared, then, for the possibility that such a petition may be declined. Please also note that *the second Honors Great Texts course (GTX 2302) will, for many Honors students, count only toward Honors Program requirements and not toward any specific course requirements for the Baylor degree.*

Other lower-division ("1000"- and "2000"-level) and upper-division ("3000"- and "4000"-level) Honors classes will count toward a Baylor degree exactly as would their non-Honors counterparts: an Honors section of Biology 1305-1105, for example, applies toward a lab science requirement for the Baylor degree just as does a non-Honors section of that course; but the Honors section also counts toward one's Honors Program requirements as an "additional Honors unit" (see B.3, immediately below). Upper-division courses offered by the Honors Program (HON-prefix courses: e.g., Honors 3200: Colloquium) will normally count only as upper-division electives toward the Baylor degree.

3. "Additional Honors Units"

Students may earn credit for "additional Honors units" through Honors coursework. Students may either take an available Honors course or complete an Honors contract in a non-Honors class (see §5.A, immediately above). Of these seven additional Honors units, the last three must be upper-level units earned through Honors credit in 3000- or 4000-level classes. Honors Colloquium II (HON 3201), while not required, may be taken as an elective for an upper-level Honors unit.

Other than Colloquium (i.e., HON 3201), credit for these additional Honors classes may not be earned by repeating specifically required Honors courses unless the course content changes. To repeat any course previously taken in an Honors section is to forfeit any Honors credit previously earned (if any was earned) in that class unless specific approval has been granted by the program director.

C. *Alternative Means for Earning Credit for Additional Honors Units*

Several alternative options are available for students to fulfill one or more of their additional Honors units. Honors students are strongly encouraged to earn credit for one of their additional Honors units through one (or a combination of two) of these options, but *a maximum of two additional Honors units may normally be fulfilled by these means.*

The following activities can earn students **a complete additional Honors unit** that can be used for upper or lower level as needed:

- serving as a leader in the Freshman Reading Project (see Part Three, below); or
- writing an extended response essay and/or making a formal presentation (with the preliminary approval and oversight of a program director) to other Honors students after studying abroad for a semester (“Study Abroad Forum”); or
- participating in the Baylor in Washington, D.C., program and participating in the study abroad forum as above; or
- serving on a Baylor-affiliated mission trip and participating in an Honors Mission Forum, similar in structure to the Study Abroad Forum, above; or
- participate in the Baylor Research Institute (nursing students in Dallas); or
- participation in a year-long leadership role in SIGHT, BURST, CIVITAS or other approved student organization (by petition only); or
- participating in select scholarship competitions (e.g., Rhodes, Marshall, etc.).

The following activities, by comparison, can earn Honors students credit for **one-half of an additional Honors** unit. These half units can be combined to earn one full Honors unit:

Lower Level Only:

- participating as a member of the Honors Book Club or the Honors Film Club for a single semester; or

Upper or Lower Level:

- serving as a leader in the Honors Book Club or the Honors Film Club for a single semester (note that students typically must have participated for at least one semester before they will be allowed to serve as a leader); or
- presenting part of one’s thesis project during Honors Week or at an academic conference (on Baylor’s campus or elsewhere); or
- satisfactory participation in and completion of the HRC Co-curricular Lecture/Panel Series (“Formation Series”) for a single semester; or
- serving on the staff of *The Pulse: The Undergraduate Journal of Baylor University* for a single semester; or
- serving on the Honors Student Advisory Council (HSAC) or the BIC Leadership Council for a single semester.

Honors-unit credit for these activities is not granted automatically. To finalize an Honors student’s credit earned by one of these means, the pertinent member of the Honors Program administration must formally verify that (1) the activity is approved as an alternative way of fulfilling all or part of an additional Honors unit, and (2) the student has participated in the activity fully and has completed it satisfactorily.

Occasionally, and only with Honors Program approval, a third Alternative Honors Unit may be earned. Credit for such opportunities for a third unit should never be assumed but arranged ahead of time with an Honors Program advisor. **In all cases, at least one upper-level Honors Unit must be earned in the classroom, i.e., via a 3000- or 4000-level Honors class or contract.**

Questions about participation in one of these activities should be directed to the appropriate member of the Honors Program faculty and staff. For more information on the Honors Book Club, the Honors Film Club, and the Freshman Reading Project, as well as on Honors Week, please see Part Three, below.

D. *Approved Modifications of Program Curriculum*

1. Second-Semester Entrants into the Honors Program

Students who enter the Honors Program as second-semester freshmen need not make up the two Honors courses normally required during the first semester of study (i.e., FYS 1399 plus one additional Honors unit will be waived). So, these students, who apply to and are admitted into the program during the Christmas break of their first year of study, will usually complete a total of 14 credit-hours of specifically required Honors courses and six additional Honors units (generally the equivalent of 18 credit-hours)—including all courses, listed above, that are required in the curriculum from the spring of the first year through graduation. (These students should especially note that they must take the first Honors GTX course, or alternatively earn Honors credit in a BIC course, and complete an additional Honors unit during their first semester in the program.) Students who enter during the spring of the first year and who are also in another Honors College program will begin their modified requirements (see D.2, immediately below) with those listed for the second semester of Honors Program work. Students who enter the program during sophomore year may, at the Honors Program director's discretion, have a total of three lower-level Honors units waived.

2. Students Participating in Other Programs in the Honors College

(a) Baylor Interdisciplinary Core:

Students in the Honors Program who are also participating in the Baylor Interdisciplinary Core (BIC) should follow a modified Honors curriculum during the first four semesters of study. By virtue of their completing all required BIC courses, these students are not required by the Honors Program to take FYS 1399, GTX 2301, or GTX 2302. However, *in place of these courses from which they are exempt, BIC-Honors students must earn credit for some other Honors course during each of the first three semesters of study.*

BIC-Honors students will earn an identical number of Honors units because they still complete an average of two Honors units per semester during the first two years of study. BIC-Honors students generally satisfy some of these requirements by earning Honors credit in at least one of their BIC courses during each of the first four semesters at Baylor (e.g., World Cultures I, II, III, or IV; Social World I or II). Honors credit for lower-division BIC courses is most often arranged by group contract, such that BIC faculty conduct special Honors-credit seminars, satisfactory completion of which can earn BIC-Honors students credit toward their Honors Program requirements. **For these BIC group contracted courses, a grade of B or better in the regular BIC course will be required for Honors credit alongside successful completion of the contract work.** The figure below provides a possible curriculum for BIC-Honors freshmen and sophomores. Note that BIC-Honors students may elect to take up to 7 of their BIC courses by group contracts for Honors credit. In such cases, the following suggested schedule would be followed:

BIC Replacement of *Required* and *Additional* Honors Courses:

	<i>Fall Term</i>	<i>Spring Term</i>
<i>First Year of Study</i>	BIC 1314 (with group contract for Honors credit)	BIC 1324 (with group contract for Honors credit)
		Additional Honors unit
<i>Second Year of Study</i>	BIC 2334 (with group contract for Honors credit)	HON 3200: Colloquium I
	BIC 2330 (with group contract for Honors credit)	BIC 2344 (with group contract for Honors credit)
		BIC 2340 (with group contract for Honors credit)

The final two years of the standard Honors Program curriculum (as depicted above, in §5.B) apply to Honors students also in the BIC.

(b) University Scholars Program:

University Scholars in the Honors Program generally follow a modified version of the standard Honors Program curriculum (see §5.B, above). Approved exceptions to that standard model are these:

- (1) The special University Scholars sequence of GTX 2301 and 2302 (“U” sections), taken respectively during the fall and spring of the first year, substitutes for the otherwise-required Honors GTX 2301 and 2302 course sequence. Honors credit will be awarded for the University Scholars GTX courses.
- (2) Successful completion of the University Scholar’s Exit Interview (and the readings required therein) earns a Scholar **two** upper-level Honors units. University Scholars may elect to take other advanced Honors classes or complete Honors contracts in lieu of some or all of these upper-level units, but they will still have to complete the UNSC Exit Interview to satisfy University Scholars requirements.
- (3) Scholars in the Honors Program *must* complete four hours of Honors Thesis courses to satisfy graduation requirements for the major. (For other majors, the thesis hours are taken for Honors credit and may also satisfy upper-level elective requirements but are not specifically required to graduate.):

Following is a snapshot of the Honors Program curriculum pursued by University Scholars.

	<i>Fall Term</i>	<i>Spring Term</i>
<i>First Year of Study</i>	GTX 2301: Intellectual Tradition of the Ancient World (UNSC)	GTX 2302: Medieval Intellectual Tradition (UNSC)
	Additional Honors unit: possibly FYS 1399 (Honors)	Additional Honors unit
<i>Second Year of Study</i>	Additional Honors unit	HON 3200: Colloquium I
	Additional Honors unit	Additional Honors unit
<i>Third Year of Study</i>	HON 3100: Advanced Readings & Research	HON 3101: Advanced Readings & Research
	Additional Honors unit (upper level; may be satisfied through UNSC Exit Interview)	Additional Honors unit (upper level; may be satisfied through UNSC Exit Interview)
<i>Fourth Year of Study</i>	HON 4v87; 2 hrs: Honors Thesis	HON 4v87; 2 hrs: Honors Thesis
	Additional Honors unit (upper level)	HON 4088: Honors Exit Review

See §5.B and C, above, for avenues for completing the first four additional Honors units. Scholars who do not complete these first five Honors units but complete all other Honors requirements (GTX 2301 (UNSC section) and GTX 2302 (UNSC section) and HON 3200 (and/or HON 3201) and HON 3101 and the Honors thesis hours (HON 4V87 and HON 4088)) may be eligible for Departmental Honors but will not be recognized as “Honors Program Graduates” or “Honors Scholars with Distinction.” See Part Two, §8.A, below, for more information regarding Honors Program graduation requirements and recognition.

(c) University Scholars Program & Baylor Interdisciplinary Core:

Those Honors students who are also in both the University Scholars Program and the Baylor Interdisciplinary Core should follow the Honors Program curriculum for BIC students: see 2.(a), above. Successful completion of the University Scholar’s Exit Interview may still earn two upper-level Honor units for University Scholars who are also in the BIC.

3. Junior-Year Entrants into the Honors Program (“Departmental Honors”)

Students who are admitted into the Honors Program as first-semester juniors must complete a modified version of the upper-division portion (the final two years) of the Honors curriculum:

	<i>Fall Term</i>	<i>Spring Term</i>
<i>Third Year of Study</i>	<i>HON 3200: Colloquium I</i>	HON 3100 and 3101**: Advanced Readings/Research
	Additional Honors unit #1	Additional Honors unit #2 (if not completed in fall term)
	(HON 3100, if ready to begin thesis research; otherwise take HON 3100 in the spring)**	
<i>Fourth Year of Study</i>	HON 4v87; 2 hrs: Honors Thesis	HON 4v87; 2 hrs: Honors Thesis
	Additional Honors unit #3	HON 4088: Honors Exit Interview

Note:

** Junior-year entrants and transfer students should discuss the specifics of their Honors curriculum with their Honors Program advisor.

4. Certain Designated Professional Programs

Honors students in certain professional programs (i.e., Engineering, Nursing, Music, and Education) may, with the approval of their advisor, have their Honors curriculum adjusted to accommodate their major requirements. In all cases, however, Honors students must complete at least (1) Honors Colloquium (HON 3200), (2) 3 upper-level Honors units, and (3) the Honors thesis. Education majors may be able to substitute TED 2380, 2381, or 3380 (with an Honors contract) for the second required Great Texts class, GTX 2302. Similarly, Music majors may substitute an Honors contract in a required history of music class for GTX 2302. Other adjustments to the Honors curriculum may be advised for certain professional program students. For example, it may be necessary for an education major to complete the bulk of his or her thesis project before the start of her senior year. A nursing student must usually complete HON 3200 before the end of their sophomore year as this course option will likely not be available at the Dallas campus.

§ 6. **Academic Advisement and Course Registration**

A. **General Policies**

Honors Program students, including those also participating in other Honors College programs, must be advised by an Honors Program staff member before they can register for the following term's classes. This requirement begins when a student enters the program and persists until graduation. Students will be notified by email each semester about the relevant advisement period, and they will find specific instructions and expectations on the "Advising" page within the "Current Students" section of the Honors Program Web site (<<http://www.baylor.edu/honorsprogram>>). Included in the email correspondence is the link through which students may, electronically, make advising appointments with their Honors advisor, as well as any forms which students must complete prior to those appointments.

The general advisement timetable, always subject to modification based on the semester's official registration calendar, is roughly this:

- For Spring Semester: Advisement appointments begin in mid- or late September;
- For Fall Semester: Advisement appointments begin in early February; and
- For Summer Semester: Advisement is concurrent with advising for the fall.

Regardless of their intentions about continuance in the program, Honors Program students must be advised by program personnel before they register for the next term's classes. If a student intends to withdraw from the Honors Program, he or she should plan to complete that withdrawal process in advance of registration or risk a delay in signing up for classes. Any questions about one's standing in the Honors Program should be addressed to a student's assigned Honors Program advisor.

B. Procedures for Honors Students Being Advised in Other Units

Many Honors students must also arrange a separate advising appointment for their major requirements; some may also require advisement with their other Honors College unit(s). Any Honors student who attends such an appointment *before* an Honors advisement session should bring any notes from that appointment to the appointment with the Honors advisor.

C. Registration for Classes

Except in the case of entering freshmen, Honors Program students will normally register during their assigned registration period by entering their course selections (Course Reference Numbers) into BearWeb online.

The day of registration for each Baylor student will be announced well in advance by the Registrar's office via Baylor email (and usually by way of the University calendar, as well). Because of the distinctive expectations and requirements which must be satisfied by Honors students, the University most often allows them to register early in the process. This arrangement is, however, a privilege reserved for those who responsibly complete all the necessary advisement-related steps; not an *ipso facto* right for all students enrolled in the program. The Honors Program office, then, will not hastily arrange last-minute advising appointments for students who ignore instructions about arranging to be advised in a timely fashion. This includes students intending to withdraw from the Honors Program who have not completed the necessary steps and paperwork (see Section 7 below).

§ 7. Withdrawal from the Honors Program

Honors Program students who wish to withdraw from the program must first meet with their assigned Honors Program advisor to discuss the request and its ramifications, including on their degree plan and graduation requirements. If moving forward with the withdrawal, the advisor will provide them with the Program Withdrawal Request form which must be filled out, signed, and returned to that advisor (physical copy or as a scanned email attachment). Only if this request is approved by the program director—and not, therefore, automatically upon submitting it—will an Honors student be officially withdrawn from the program.

Students who withdraw from the Honors Program in this fashion, however, *are not* automatically dropped from any lower- or upper-division Honors courses in which they may be enrolled. **It is the responsibility of the student who opts to exit the program during an academic term to drop any Honors courses (if applicable) from her current schedule. Similarly, the student dropping Honors must also make arrangements with the relevant professor to have a grade assigned for any incomplete in an HON course.** Particularly with the HON 3100/3101 courses, this may entail completing unfinished work for a grade even though the student has dropped, or intends on dropping, the Honors Program.

Students who officially withdraw from the program but do not drop their Honors courses, will be assigned grades based on the stated requirements (including the attendance policies) of these courses. And if such a student earns either a poor grade or a “No Credit” mark in an HON course housed in the Honors Program, she will not, because of her exit from the Honors Program, be eligible to re-take this Honors course during a later semester.

Quite rarely indeed (but nevertheless at the director’s discretion) will a withdrawn Honors Program student be considered for re-admission to the program.

§ 8. The Graduation Semester and Commencement

A. General Notes

An Honors student’s final semester in the program prior to graduation usually includes several important milestones, among them (though not necessarily in this order):

- presenting a brief overview of one’s Honors thesis during J. Harry and Anna Jeanes Academic Honors Week;
- participating in a special banquet or reception, hosted by the Honors Program, which celebrates upcoming Honors graduates and their faculty mentors;
- defending the completed thesis project before a faculty panel comprising at least the thesis director (as first reader and committee chair); another full-time Baylor faculty member from within the student’s disciplinary field (as second reader); and a third reader, i.e., a professor from a different academic unit or an expert from outside the University;
- submitting an approved, correctly formatted, and (as necessary) modified and corrected thesis to the Honors Program (through BEARdocs); and
- participating in commencement exercises.

N.B.: The first two of these milestones (Honors Week and the Honors Banquet/Reception) occur during each spring term only; so prospective August or December Honors Program graduates will be expected to participate in these events during the spring prior to their graduation in the summer or fall semester.

To graduate from the program and to earn the distinctions pertinent to this achievement, Honors Program students must complete all its curricular requirements (including all those for the Honors thesis, from coursework to submission of the defended and approved thesis document), as certified by the Honors Program, and **must graduate with at least a 3.2 cumulative grade point average.** It is

theoretically possible, then, to complete the Honors Program curriculum, including the thesis, but still not graduate from the program because of a low final GPA. Note that **grade point averages are never rounded up in determining the GPA.**

Those who successfully graduate from the program earn one of the following types of distinction:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| “Honors Program Graduate”: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">· completion of all program requirements (first through fourth years)
<i>and</i>· cumulative GPA of 3.2 to less than 3.5 |
| “Honors Scholar with Distinction”: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">· completion of all program requirements (first through fourth years)
<i>and</i>· cumulative GPA of 3.5 or above |
| “Departmental Honors”: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">· completion of upper-division requirements (see §5.D.(3), above)
<i>and</i>· cumulative GPA of 3.2 or above |

Graduates from the Honors Program are formally recognized for their achievements during commencement exercises, at which they wear special green and gold cords in addition to the traditional graduation regalia. The Honors Program designation is also included on their final transcripts, and the Honors Program sends each graduate a seal to affix to his diploma when he receives the diploma from the University. Note that Baylor no longer hands out official diplomas at the commencement ceremony; rather, the University mails them out afterward, usually in the weeks following the ceremony.

B. Honors Contracts During the Senior Year

As much as possible, Honors Program seniors must complete all Honors contracts during the penultimate semester rather than during the final semester as an undergraduate at Baylor. The Honors Program no longer allows attempts to complete an honors contract during the graduating semester, as doing so may preclude graduation from the Honors Program if the contract is not completed or an acceptable grade is not achieved in the contracted course.

Likewise, students should plan on completing all Honors classes (except for the thesis) prior to the start of the final semester. While this may not always be possible, particularly if adjustments to the schedule have been made for study abroad opportunities and the like, this will allow prospective graduates to focus time and effort on the writing of the thesis. An early finish to Honors coursework will also minimize the chance that some unforeseen problems with the curriculum will hinder Honors Program graduation.

PART THREE: Program Community and Features

§ 1. Freshman Reading Project

Each year the Honors Program's faculty and staff select a book to be read by all incoming first-year Honors students. The Freshman Reading Project, participation in which is expected of all entering Honors students, is designed to promote community through the common experience of reading and discussing a thought-provoking text. The book is announced before or during Summer Orientation, and incoming Honors students may purchase the book at the Baylor Bookstore while on campus or through other means (e.g., online outlets) on their own. Students are asked to read the book *before* arriving at Baylor to begin the fall semester. Upon arriving in the fall, these incoming Honors students will attend an Honors Freshman Assembly where Baylor faculty and other speakers will address themes in the book and where students will be assigned to discussion groups led by upper-division Honors Program students. (These upper-division Honors students may thereby earn credit for an additional Honors unit: see Part Two, §5.C, above.) After preparing for and completing the small-group discussion, each entering Honors student will be asked, for example, to write a 600- to 800-word critical essay in response to an assigned essay prompt. These essays, or some alternate projects as assigned in the discussion groups, will be evaluated by the student discussion leaders and will be kept on file to serve as the basis for awards occasionally given by the Honors Program to its first-year students, and may be used to determine these students' eligibility during the first year for other prerequisites of the program: e.g., early registration for the following semester's classes, involvement in the Honors Book and Film Clubs.

§ 2. Honors Book Club and Film Club

The Book and Film Clubs provide student-led opportunities, in a shared community context, for the viewing of great films and the reading of noteworthy books.

Participating in the *Honors Film Club* entails watching and discussing two of the films that are offered each semester by student leaders under the oversight of the faculty adviser. After viewing the films, participants write a 600- to 800-word essay for each film. Students, particularly freshmen and sophomores, may earn half an Honors unit (toward the program's curricular requirements) by participating in the Film Club for a single semester. A student may earn half of an upper-division Honors unit by *leading* a Club group during a following semester. Leading a film club entails researching the relevant film and its director and then presenting this information to introduce the film to the group. Also, the leader must prepare discussion questions and facilitate the conversation following the film. Finally, each leader will collect and evaluate the essays written by participants about the film. Typically, students must have participated for at least one semester before they will be considered to become a leader in a subsequent semester. Participants and leaders alike will not earn credit unless they have, to the faculty advisor's satisfaction, completed these requirements successfully.

Participating in the *Honors Book Club* involves reading one of the books selected by student leaders and by program staff, attending two small-group meetings, at each of which one half of the book is discussed, and writing a 600- to 800-word essay. As with Film Club, students may earn half of an additional lower-

division Honors unit by fully participating in the Book Club for an entire semester. Likewise, students may earn a half of an upper-division Honors credit through leading a Book Club group for a second semester; and leaders will almost always be chosen from students who have already been a participant for at least one full semester. Leading a group involves selecting a noteworthy text in consultation with the faculty adviser, preparing a description of the text to be disseminated to prospective participants, contacting the students who enroll in the group, and arranging and conducting two meetings at which the group will discuss the text. The leader will also assign an essay prompt and will collect and evaluate the submitted essays. Participants and leaders alike will not earn credit unless they have, to the faculty advisor's satisfaction, completed these requirements successfully.

An interest meeting for prospective leaders of Book Club and Film Club is held early each semester; semester-specific information about this opportunity will also be sent to eligible Honors Program students via their Baylor email addresses and will be posted on the program's web site. Interested students should expect to sign up for a Book or Film Club group in the Honors Program office area by around a month into the term (i.e., by mid-September in the fall, or by early February in the spring) and must submit their completed essays before the final week of classes that term (in early December for a fall term, or late April or early May for a spring term).

§ 3. J. Harry and Anna Jeanes Academic Honors Week

Thanks to generosity of Mr. Harry and Mrs. Anna Jeanes, who established an endowment for it, each spring Baylor University hosts the J. Harry and Anna Jeanes Academic Honors Week.

Honors Week provides a venue for students and faculty to attend special lectures, for Honors Program seniors to present (in a conference-style setting) overviews of their thesis projects, and for the Honors Program to applaud those seniors, along with their faculty thesis directors, at a special banquet or reception. The fulcrum of the week is Honors Convocation, at which outstanding students from across campus are celebrated by their departments and programs and are addressed by a special guest speaker.

Further information about Honors Week is available on the Honors Program web page and from the Honors College dean's office.

§ 4. Honors Residential College (HRC)

Students formally admitted into the Honors Program become eligible to apply for residence in the Honors Residential College. The HRC—the product of a partnership between Campus Living & Learning and the Honors College—is designed expressly for students in at least one of the four Honors College programs, and it includes on-site classrooms and faculty offices, and coordinates special lectures and activities for such students. The HRC comprises Alexander Hall for men and Memorial Hall for women. We encourage all Honors Program students at least to consider this special housing opportunity: connecting with one's peers in more than simply an academic sense, having conversations with them that spill over from the classroom into the residence hall and vice-versa, and expanding the reach of the questions we ask of ourselves and each other—all this squares very nicely with what the Honors Program is trying to cultivate among its students and faculty and staff.

Please see the HRC Web site (<<http://www.baylor.edu/hrc>>) to learn more about this housing venture. Note that Honors Program students are not required to live in the HRC and many of its activities (such as the lecture series described below) are open to all Honors College students. Honors Program students who *do* want to live in Honors College housing should realize that they are not guaranteed placement in the HRC as openings are limited and highly valued.

A. *HRC Co-curricular Lecture and Panel Series (“Formation Series”)*

The HRC is a place where one can thoroughly integrate one’s living and learning experience. Members of the HRC will be able to take advantage of a variety of integrative opportunities. One way is through participation in a series of co-curricular lectures and panel discussions hosted by the HRC. The hope is that a common conversation within the HRC can begin around this series of lectures and panel discussions (usually, three each semester) focused on the theme of education as formation.

Honors Program students can earn half an additional Honors unit through their participation in this series for a semester. Satisfactory participation entails attending two of the lectures/panels in a semester and writing a reflection on the material presented at one of these sessions. This essay will be evaluated by student leaders in the HRC. Participation in the HRC Formation Series for two semesters can, then, earn one full Honors unit. This opportunity is open to all Honors Program students; indeed, attendance at the lectures and discussions is highly encouraged for all Honors College students including those not residing in the HRC, and those who are part of the Honors College but not members of the Honors Program.

PART FOUR: Descriptions of Several Parts of the Curriculum

§ 1. Honors Colloquium, HON 3200/3201

A. Overview

Colloquium is a two-credit-hour course for sophomores and juniors in the Honors Program. Students attend *five designated colloquia* during the semester, mostly in small groups, for informal discussions of books and readings selected by a variety of professors and (occasionally) Waco civic leaders. These conversations introduce Honors students to a variety of classical and contemporary issues and to the distinctive perspectives of scholarly disciplines other than their major fields of study. A make-up colloquium session will be offered at the end of the semester. This make-up session will be open only to students who missed one of the five mandatory sessions *with an excused absence*, and who have requested and received permission from the course coordinator in advance to attend. *There is no way for a student to “make up” for missing more than one of the five sessions, or to make up for an unexcused absence.*

B. Meeting Times

Colloquium sessions usually, but not always, meet on Mondays, 7-9:30 pm. There are five dates per semester, held roughly every two weeks. Note that meeting times are subject to change; students should consult the course syllabus for specific information.

C. Course Assignments

1. Required Reading and Preparation

After receiving their individual Colloquium schedules, students should prepare for each session with a thorough reading of the assigned texts. Some professors will provide the Honors Program with special instructions or some questions for students to consider during their reading. If the professor provides no specific preliminary instructions, then students should bring to the session *three substantial questions or comments* (typewritten) that demonstrate careful and thoughtful study of the material. Colloquium leaders may, at their discretion, collect these documents or ask individual students to present one or more of their questions and comments.

2. Attendance & Participation

Professors may wish to begin by presenting some background information, but most of the session should be devoted to discussion. Each student’s contributions to the session are essential and will be considered when evaluating his or her performance. Some students will have much to say, but should exercise prudent self-restraint in order to allow opportunities for everyone to contribute. Only in rare circumstances can a missed session be made up; semester-specific instructions about attendance and absences will be provided in the Colloquium syllabus each term.

3. Essays

Specific formatting requirements for the response essays may be found on the course syllabus; typically they must be 900-1000 words (typed, double-spaced). They should be emailed to the instructor of your particular colloquium session, and are typically due by 11:59 pm of the Sunday following the Monday session. Late papers will be penalized one point per day. There will be no rewrites of essays, so be sure that you have carefully checked your work. You should consider asking a friend to read each essay before you turn it in.

D. Grading

Grading scales and other expectations will be discussed in the course syllabus. After reviewing the essays, Colloquium instructors evaluate each student's overall performance in the pertinent session, usually on a scale of 1-10. Though attendance as such earns students some credit, both attendance and participation (including oral discussion and the written essay) are required for a student to earn any credit for the session and matter most in terms of evaluation. Thus students should give their best effort to all aspects of the course, from reading and preparation to the Monday night discussion, to crafting each written response. (Enrolled students are provided supplemental guidelines for advice on essay writing.) Session instructors may offer an opportunity to revise a failing essay, but they are by no means required to do so.

Students who plagiarize all or part of any Colloquium response essay will automatically receive an "F" for the course and be dismissed from the Honors Program. (As an obvious result, such students will not qualify to re-take Colloquium.)

§ 2. The Honors Thesis Project, HON 3100/3101 & 4V87

A. General Overview

Most of the upper-division Honors Program curriculum is devoted to the development of a thesis project under the direction of a thesis advisor (faculty mentor). Through independent study and research, conducted over several semesters, students begin to apply the methods of their chosen discipline(s) to the investigation of a specific topic of interest. The extent and content of Honors theses projects can vary considerably across different fields of study. A thesis may include significant components of textual criticism (in the humanities); laboratory research (in physical sciences); data collection and analysis (in social sciences); or, occasionally, creative expression (in art, creative writing, or dramatic or musical performance). In any case the thesis project introduces Honors students to the techniques of research, writing, and performance that they will encounter at the graduate level while cultivating the intellectual skills essential to critical inquiry and advanced scholarship.

1. HON 3100 and 3101: Advanced Readings & Research I & II:

Foundations: Program administrators strongly recommend that students initiate conversations with faculty in their research fields about possible thesis topics and introductory readings or lab work during the semester prior to enrolling in HON 3100, if not sooner. Then, the thesis project usually begins in earnest in the junior year with a sequence of two Advanced Readings & Research courses, HON 3100 and 3101, for two credit hours total. Some students, particularly those that are

premed or conducting theses in the sciences, **may begin the thesis sooner**. The goals of the first introductory classes are to lay a foundation for future research while securing a faculty mentor that will serve as the thesis advisor. Honors students will become familiar with current methodologies, debates, techniques, and problems in their research discipline. During the second Readings & Research course, students will complete and submit a formal proposal which outlines a research agenda or performance design and identifies the primary sources and tentative methods for the thesis project. This document must be signed by the Baylor faculty member who has agreed to direct the Honors thesis. Many students will also be expected to begin, where appropriate or possible, the thesis-writing process during the second Readings & Research hour.

(a) Expectations:

Students enrolled in HON 3100 will be introduced to research methods and general thesis-writing strategies in the weekly class sessions, as well as more discipline-specific research and writing considerations in a **Proseminar series**. These sessions will be led by Honors College faculty and staff and their colleagues. *Participation in the Proseminar series is a required component of HON 3100 and will impact the student's final grade in the class.*

After securing a preliminary thesis advisor, the student will more earnestly undertake a series of readings and research in HON 3101. These readings and research elements are arranged by formal contract at the conclusion of HON 3100 (or in the middle of the semester if HON 3100 and HON 3101 are taken concurrently). Signing an Advanced Readings & Research contract does not oblige the professor to oversee the entire Honors thesis project, though this is usually the case.

When necessary, the thesis advisor should guide the Honors student through the process of gaining procedural approval to conduct certain kinds of research when necessary, e.g., from the Institutional Review Board if human or animal subjects are used.. The Honors student is sponsored, then, by the thesis advisor and his or her home department and college or school, rather than by the Honors Program or Honors College.

In the humanities and social sciences, typical reading lists for *one* Readings & Research course often range from 1000 to 2000 total pages, with various combinations of books and articles from both from primary and secondary sources. In the sciences and professional fields, a battery of laboratory or field-work procedures, roughly equivalent in scope, may be devised by a Readings mentor where appropriate. The student's progress is usually evaluated through a series of regular discussions with the supervising professor. The extent of the readings or laboratory work, along with specific procedures for reporting and evaluation, remain at the discretion of that professor, and all of these should be clearly indicated in the initial contract.

(b) Evaluation and Curricular Progress:

A letter grade is assigned for each of these one-hour Readings & Research courses. For HON 3100, a grade will be assigned by the professor of record, often in conjunction with the student's thesis advisor. For HON 3101, the student's grade is typically assigned by

the thesis advisor in whose section the student registers. Submission of the thesis proposal to the Honors Program is part of the evaluated requirements for HON 3101.

Both Advanced Readings & Research courses should be completed by no later than the end of the junior year. The Readings & Research courses will precede the Honors Thesis courses, i.e., HON 4v87 for 4 credit hours, often taken for 2 credit hours each semester during the senior year.

Students need not necessarily be in residence at Baylor to complete these courses, but remote work needs to be carefully coordinated between the student and thesis advisor. If the student plans to conduct reading or research over the summer, the student and thesis advisor need to clearly understand expectations for communication, discussion, and review.

Additional information about deadlines and assessment will be provided to enrolled students each semester.

2. Honors 4v87, Honors Thesis: Development, Completion, and Defense

Development of the thesis continues through a sequence of courses totaling four credit hours. Each credit hour of HON 4V87 roughly corresponds to a quarter of the thesis. While students often enroll in HON 4V87 for two credit hours during each of their final semesters at Baylor, some may want to adjust the scheduling of the thesis hours to make room for study abroad, internships, medical school preparation, and the like. In all cases, students should work closely with their Honors Program academic advisors and their thesis mentors to plan the timetable.

When spreading out the thesis hours over two semesters, students should plan to write and submit half the thesis during the penultimate semester and then the remainder of the thesis during the final semester at Baylor. The first section of the thesis is often a review of the relevant literature, previously explored in the Advanced Readings & Research courses and situates the thesis in the context of other scholarship. Subsequent sections then proceed to analyze primary sources, data, or laboratory results.

At the conclusion of the project, the student will present the completed thesis to be evaluated by a committee of at least three professors in a one-hour oral defense session.

Credit for the senior-year Honors Thesis courses will be awarded at the conclusion of each semester as determined by the mentoring professor. Thesis hours are graded on a Credit/No Credit basis, and thesis hours do not calculate in one's GPA.

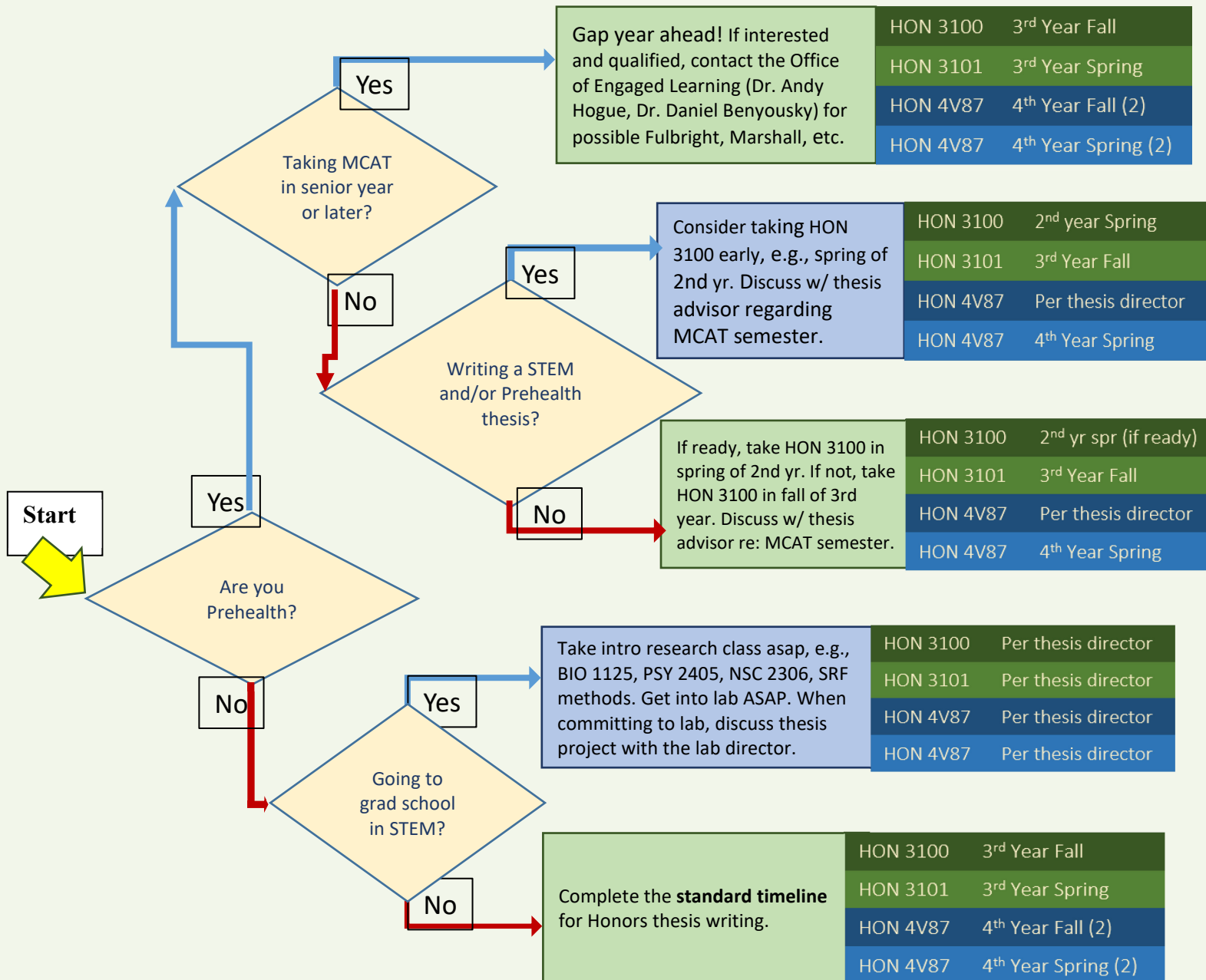
(a) Expectations of Enrollees:

In most every case, Honors students who enroll in HON 4V87 should have already completed (1) Colloquium (HON 3200); (2) at least one of the three required upper-level Honors units; (3) the Advanced Readings & Research courses (HON 3100 & 3101); and thus (4) the approved thesis proposal.

Honors students who have not completed the above, and/or whose overall GPAs have fallen to below 3.2, will be asked to reconsider the feasibility of successfully finishing the Honors thesis project and the program's requirements in time for graduation.

(b) Suggested Timetable:

This flow chart provides a guide as to when a student might begin writing the thesis. This is just a guide, and a student's circumstances may dictate a different timetable.



For those following the standard timeline, i.e., registering for HON 3100 in the fall of their junior year, here is a sample of what you might be doing semester-by-semester.

Sophomore Year:

- *Spring term:* Discuss prospective thesis projects with Baylor faculty in your department or field, especially those faculty with research experience. Look at the faculty profiles on the department's web page, but pay particular attention to those professors with whom you've taken classes.

Junior Year:

- *Fall term:* Continue in a more intentional and perhaps more formal fashion your conversations with prospective faculty directors about project direction. Most Honors students will enroll in and complete HON 3100: Advanced Readings & Research I. If possible, you should pursue credit for an additional upper-level Honors unit by way of an Honors contract in a 3000- or 4000-level course. When you do this, try to arrange to do supplemental Honors work that dovetails with your possible thesis/research area.
- *Spring term:* Enroll in and complete HON 3101, Advanced Readings & Research II. Complete the agreed-upon readings and/or procedures. Develop and submit, by the announced deadline, your thesis proposal. Whenever possible, you should also work extensively on a full outline (and, in the best case, a well-developed draft) of the first chapter of your emerging thesis. Submit your work-in-progress to your director for review.

Senior Year:

- *Fall term:* Enroll in and earn credit for HON 4V87, which entails completing and submitting both a full-fledged draft of your first two chapters (i.e., roughly half your thesis). Bear in mind that each hour of credit for HON 4V87 commits the student to completing about ¼ of the entire thesis project. Finally, in consultation with your faculty director, begin to organize the faculty panel before which you will defend your project in the spring.
- *Spring (graduation) term:* Enroll in and complete HON 4V87 for two credit hours. These final two hours require that you submit the completed thesis essay to the faculty director (and often to the second reader) by around Spring Break; present an overview of your work during Honors Week; defend the project before a faculty panel; format the defended project appropriately and making any necessary revisions; and submit the final copy to the Honors Program via BEARdocs.

B. A Note About Creative Projects & Foreign Language Theses

Students are encouraged to pursue interdisciplinary or creative thesis projects whenever viable, particularly when pursuing a major in studio art, language arts, theater, film and digital media, or music. A creative project includes a significant artistic or imaginative component leading to the production of

new material. A creative thesis may, then, involve such tasks as creative writing, painting, sculpture, photography, musical composition, stage drama, digital editing, computer programming, etc. **Note that while such creative elements can be a significant and central feature of a thesis, the project must also include an argumentative and/or reflective component.**

Similarly, theses that incorporate significant use of a foreign language must also include an argumentative component. For example, a proposed thesis that merely translates another work is, in and of itself, not acceptable, but a thesis that translates another work but also explains the reason for such translation, or discusses particular elements of translation, or frames an argument about the original author's intent, will certainly be an acceptable thesis project. A thesis may be written in a foreign language, provided that the committee members reviewing the thesis are experts in the language and approve of such a project.

C. Defense and Submission

During the penultimate semester, each Honors student and her faculty director should work to set up a defense committee, including at least:

1. *the supervising faculty director*, who serves as committee chair and “first reader”;
2. *a second full-time Baylor professor* (the “second reader”) from the discipline/department in which the project is completed (i.e., in most cases, from the director's department);
a third reader, usually a professor from another department or program at Baylor University or an Honors Program representative. In rare circumstances, the third reader may be a person from outside the university, particularly in those cases where extensive research is conducted at an outside lab or facility

Additional committee members may be appointed at the discretion of the chair. Early in the final thesis semester, students will submit the thesis defense scheduling form which notifies the Honors Program office of the date, time, location, and composition of the thesis defense. A thesis defense usually lasts around an hour. More detailed instructions for the thesis defense can be found in the [Guidelines for the Oral Defense](#) available online.

Final copies, as approved by the defense panel, along with other supporting materials as assigned to enrollees, must be submitted on or before the final day of classes during the graduation semester. All submissions are made via BEARdocs, the online repository for Baylor University. Students will be granted permission to submit the thesis only after passing a thesis formatting review conducted by the Honors Program office. Information about the submission process can be found online at www.baylor.edu/honorsprogram/beardocs.

D. Firm Final Deadline

The final deadline for submission of the completed thesis is firm. Please plan carefully. Failure to meet the final deadline will preclude graduating from the Honors Program that semester. A student who completes the thesis after the final deadline may delay graduation to a later semester.

A student who completes the thesis after the final deadline may also choose to graduate that semester but not as an Honors Program graduate (assuming all other requirements for the degree have been met). In

doing so, however, the student forfeits any Honors Program recognition, both at graduation and on his or her transcript, even though all the Honors Program requirements may have been completed though at a later date. This is necessary since once a student's academic record has been certified for graduation, it cannot be changed to indicate subsequent work. This is the same reason a student cannot graduate with an incomplete for any coursework undertaken at Baylor University.

Honors Program students should, then, plan to finish the thesis well before the final deadline. Problems and glitches invariably arise with a project as large and complex as a thesis. A student would be wise to give herself some extra time to work through such issues. While the directors, faculty, and staff are quite sympathetic to the problems that may crop up in the final production of a thesis, they are unable to bend time and allow the final deadline necessary for graduation to be superseded.

E. F. Ray Wilson Thesis Prize

In gratitude to F. Ray Wilson II for outstanding service to Baylor University, a thesis prize was established in 2009 to recognize the best thesis defended during a calendar year. The winner will be chosen from up to three finalists selected each year from Social Sciences, Physical and Life Sciences, and Humanities. These produced in a professional program (e.g., Business) are usually included in the Social Sciences category, and creative theses (e.g., music, art, theater, and other fine arts) are included in the Humanities category.

To be considered a finalist for best thesis, a graduate must receive an "Outstanding" designation following his or her thesis defense. The thesis director must then write a letter nominating the thesis. Nomination requires a letter or email of support sent to the Director of the Honors Program. The nominator should (1) state the division in which the thesis should be reviewed, (2) explain why it should be considered, (3) describe its contribution to the field in which it has been nominated, and (4) address the extent to which it is publishable.

After all theses for a given year have been defended, faculty panels in each of the three areas will select either one or no finalist from each of the three divisions. The three panels will make their recommendations to a prize committee. That committee will name a prize winner to be invited to return to Baylor for the annual Honors Week banquet in late April. An honorarium will be provided for remarks the winner gives to the Honors graduates. Award monies will also be provided for transportation and lodging. The director of the winning thesis will also receive a special invitation to the Honors Week banquet. Should the winner be unable to return for the banquet, the committee may instead select the runner-up. Winners and thesis directors will have their names engraved on a nameplate affixed to a plaque featuring a portrait of Ray Wilson and displayed in a prominent location. In case of a non-returning winner and a returning runner-up, both names will be inscribed on separate plaque nameplates.

The Honors Program reserves the right to make changes to the Wilson Thesis Award now or in the future. Information about the thesis award will be displayed on the Honors Program web site.

F. Joint undergraduate/graduate programs

All Honors Program graduates must complete a thesis. However, students in a joint undergraduate/graduate degree program who write a graduate-level thesis do not have to submit an Honors thesis. Instead, the Honors Program will accept the completed graduate-level thesis in place of the Honors thesis. Students in such programs therefore do not register for Honors thesis classes (HON 3100/3101/4V87), though they should still register for HON 4088 during their final semester. Formatting, submission, and archiving of graduate-level theses are through the Baylor Graduate School and do not occur in the Honors Program office. The student must provide proof of the successful completion of the graduate-level thesis to the Honors Program office prior to graduation.

Students may elect to write two theses, one Honors and one graduate-level, but this is not expected or required. If a student elects to write two theses, the topics must be different with little or no direct overlap in research and writing.

If a graduate-level thesis is not included in the joint degree program, students must still complete an Honors thesis in order to graduate with Honors. For example, students in the Joint BA/MA Communication Program who elect to complete the praxis practicum, CSS 5V98, must still register for and complete all Honors thesis requirements. Students in the Joint BA/MA Communication Program who elect to complete the master's thesis, CSS 5V99, do not have to register for the Honors thesis.

Even though graduate-level theses satisfy the Honors Program requirements, such theses are not eligible for the Wilson Thesis Prize.

§ 3. The Honors Exit Review, HON 4088

To graduate from the Honors Program, students must register for HON 4088 during their final undergraduate semester. Thus, it is usually, though not always, taken concurrently with a student's final semester of HON 4V87. The Honors Exit Review ensures that all Honors Program requirements, including cumulative GPA, Honors units, and the successful submission of the Honors thesis, have been satisfied. Note that a student may finish and earn credit for the Honors Thesis, HON 4v87, but still not graduate from the Honors Program if other requirements have not been met.