

Interdisciplinary Honors Studies

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In contemporary society, over-specialization has forced blinders upon many individuals. In almost every field—medicine, education, business, politics, and economics—the majority of people have difficulty looking beyond the narrow confines of their particular area of interest and expertise to comprehend how the pieces of the puzzle of human existence fit together. As a result, they suffer the debilitating symptoms of dehumanization, social fragmentation and misdirection, and the general loss of purpose in life. By enabling students to perceive a broader picture of how various fields of academic inquiry interrelate, the Interdisciplinary Honors Program enriches them intellectually and spiritually and helps them avoid the pitfalls and consequences of tunnel vision.

The Interdisciplinary Honors Program combines methods of teaching such as the Socratic method, logic and dialectic, tutorials, mentoring, lectures, seminars, and discussion groups in order to produce the highest degree of academic success. The program is designed to be four years in length to encourage a solid development of the student's knowledge base and critical thinking apparatus.

Mission Statement

The Interdisciplinary Honors Program seeks to sharpen the student's ability to assess ideas and situations critically and to think about these creatively and to encourage students to think freely and constructively across academic disciplines. A third and all-encompassing goal is to help students understand how all truth is God's truth. Because our Christian confession holds that God is the creator and sustainer of the universe as well as the redeemer of humankind, this means that our pursuit of truth will always be governed by the context of this confession.

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Program Acceptance Requirements and Standards

Members of departments across the University serve as faculty and mentors for students in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program. The program is designed to be challenging and intensive. For this reason, only select persons are invited to participate: 1) Freshmen students with an ACT(e) of 25 or higher or a record of excellence in academic work, and 2) second semester freshmen who have a 3.5 GPA. Transfer or other students who desire admission must petition the Director. The final decision to admit any student rests with the Interdisciplinary Honors Council (IHC), which is appointed by the Provost for the purpose of determining the program's policies, standards, guidelines, and goals.

Students admitted into the program are expected to maintain a grade average of "B" or better in all Honors courses. Students who fall below this expectation will be placed on probation, and their status in the program will be subject to review by the IHC. If the IHC determines that a student's work fails to satisfy the program's standards, the IHC may suggest that the student pursue the Interdisciplinary Studies Minor (see below) as an alternative to the Minor in Interdisciplinary Honors.

Minor in Interdisciplinary Honors—18 hours

- I. Interdisciplinary Core Requirements—12 hours
 - A. HON 210 and 220—Freshmen year
 - B. HON 320 and 340—Sophomore year

II. Electives Include: opportunities for travel and study abroad, study with the Scholar-in-Residence, and approved courses across the University—2 hours

III. HON 411—4 hours

The capstone of the Interdisciplinary Honors Program is the writing of the Honors thesis, a major project that is expected to be of the highest quality.

Minor in Interdisciplinary Studies—18 semester hours

The Interdisciplinary Studies minor was designed for students who determine in the course of pursuing the Interdisciplinary Honors minor that they are unable, for whatever reason, to undertake or complete the writing of a thesis. This minor is an alternative open only to students officially accepted into the Honors Program.

I. Interdisciplinary Core Requirements—12 hours

A. HON 210 and 220—Freshmen year

B. HON 320 and 340—Sophomore year

II. Electives: Opportunities for overseas travel and study, study with the Scholar-in-Residence, and approved interdisciplinary courses across the University.

Scholar-in-Residence Program

A scholar of worldwide reputation is invited each year to deliver a series of lectures at the University. Students may take the Scholar-in-Residence course which involves research, writing, and tutorials. Prerequisites: HON 210 and 220.

Student Organization

Incorporated into the Interdisciplinary Honors Program is the **Honors Student Association (HSA)** whose purpose is to serve as the social arm of the program. It functions as any social organization does, choosing officers from the student participants and organizing functions to further the academic programs of the minor. Any participant in an Honors class is eligible for membership in HSA, additionally any student interested in the program is invited to attend as a non-voting member.

Student Awards

The **Honors Student of the Year Awards** are presented to the students active in the Program who have shown the most intellectual and perceptive growth in the year's time. The awards are determined by the Honors Council.

Course Offerings in Honors (HON)

() Hours Credit

210. Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies (3)

Influences and processes contributing to the formation of worldviews and their alteration through time. Students will be taught how to live appreciatively within given cultural and theoretical perspectives and to evaluate these critically. Encouragement to think creatively about the interrelation between the disciplines of the university, and about the implications of the fields of human inquiry for Christian faith and practice, will help students to develop a worldview toward taking their place as leaders in the 21st century.

220. Great Ideas (3)

Prerequisite: HON 210.

The interdisciplinary nature of the ideas, thoughts, and theories of human culture by examination of many of the great ideas of the Western cultural and important for the humanities, natural and social sciences arts, and professional studies. The interdependence of ideas will be considered along with the way ideas operate in a variety of unique his-

torical and cultural contexts. This course will progress from a survey of Western cultural and intellectual history to presentation of papers by students in a seminar fashion.

320. Great Books I (3)

Prerequisite: HON 220.

Seminal works from the fields of philosophy, theology, history, literature, the natural sciences, or the social sciences will be studied with attention to ways these works reflect historical trends, political situations, philosophical ideas, cultural and religious traditions, and socioeconomic conditions. Students will be encouraged to think critically and creatively about these works by considering them from intellectual and cultural perspectives that lie outside the framework to which it belongs.

340. Great Books II (3)

Prerequisite: HON 320

Students will critically assess significant books related to their major field of study, including those that will help them formulate ethical principles to aid them in the practice of their profession. The Director will determine the book list for each student by consulting with his/her department. Students will meet for lectures during the early part of the semester, but for the most part they engage in research and writing concluding in a presentation paper focusing upon one book.

411. Thesis (4)

Prerequisite: Interdisciplinary Core—12 hours.

The thesis shall be presented and defended before a committee of three faculty members appointed by the IHC. Students should choose a topic by the end of their sophomore year and submit a proposal by the beginning of their junior year, leaving the junior and senior years open for research and writing. Students will sign up for the thesis during the first semester of their senior year. The thesis may be done in conjunction with senior performance requirements already established by such departments as Music, Art, Biology, Chemistry and others at the discretion of the IHC and the department.

One or more of the following courses must be chosen to fulfill the requirements of the program. All are subject to the approval of the IHC unless otherwise stated in the published schedule of class offerings.

395-6-7. Special Studies (2 or 3)

Upperlevel group studies which do not appear in the regular departmental offerings. Includes, but not restricted to, offerings of the Scholar-in-Residence Program.

495-6-7. Independent Studies (2-4)

Individual research under the guidance of a faculty member(s).