

The Honors Program Handbook 2008-2009



Stevenson University

Statement of Purpose

The Stevenson University Honors program seeks to provide academically outstanding students with the opportunity to experience a challenging and stimulating curriculum that expands beyond traditional boundaries of learning, including providing personalized environment, and encouraging personal, social and intellectual growth.

Philosophy of Honors Program:

Stevenson University Honors program engages students in a collaborative learning process that values interdisciplinary understanding, creative modes of inquiry, and a reciprocal relationship between faculty and students.

Collaborative learning is about bringing learners - including faculty and students - together to create new appreciation of complex topics and ideas. This approach is woven through each stage of the Honors experience. The Honors 100 freshmen seminar introduces freshmen honors students to interdisciplinary thinking and better acquaints them with the program. The interdisciplinary, team-taught seminars are the core of the program. In these seminars students engage in collaborative learning, and they are encouraged to explore the connections between different disciplines, and different ideas. The Learning Beyond experience enables Honors students to apply collaborative learning and interdisciplinary thinking to life outside the classroom. Whether it is a study abroad experience, an internship, or undergraduate research, successful completion of the Learning Beyond requirement relies on integrating theoretical knowledge and practical experience.

Program outcomes:

1. Offer an innovative and challenging curriculum comprised of a varied selection of interdisciplinary courses which will provide a strong foundation in analytical thinking and apperception of global complex topics.
 2. Foster a community of scholars and encourage participation in extracurricular activities.
 3. Provide opportunities for, and encourage, participation in learning beyond experiences including but not limited to experiential and service learning.
 4. Provide a variety of mentoring opportunities.
 5. Enhancing pedagogical competence and innovations of the college community.
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Admissions

First Year Students

The University Honors Program Application is separate from the regular Stevenson application for admission. Applicants must submit the regular application for admission prior to, or along with, the Stevenson University Honors Program Application. Applicants will not be reviewed for Honors admission until after being accepted to Stevenson University by the Admissions Office. Decision letters for regular admission and Honors admission are mailed separately. Honors decision letters will be mailed no later than March 1.

Transfer and Current Students

Transfer students and current Stevenson University students who were not admitted to Honors as freshmen may apply if their current cumulative GPA is at least a 3.3. These students will be required to apply to the director in writing, complete an essay, and interview with the director of the program. Admission will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Admissions and Retention Criteria

Admissions

Anyone is welcome to apply to the Stevenson University Honors Program. We encourage highly motivated and excellent students to apply to Stevenson Universities Honors program. When reviewing applications, the Honors Admission Committee considers the applicant's high school academic record, including rigor of curriculum and academic performance, along with results of SAT or ACT testing, and the quality of the responses provided on the Honors application.

A. Incoming Freshmen

All interested incoming freshmen should apply to the program. Application forms for the honors program can be found on the Stevenson University's website. Included with the application is a 2-page required essay on the topic listed on the top of the application.

B. Current/Transfer Students

Transfer students and students that were not admitted to the Honors Program as part of the College admissions process will have the opportunity to apply to the Honors Program if their cumulative GPA is at least 3.3. The admissions process includes:

- A letter of intent submitted to the director of the Honors program.
- A letter of recommendation from an advisor, or another instructor.
- A 500 word essay on the topic: "What do I expect to gain from participating in the honors program, and what can I contribute to the program?"
- An interview with the director of the Honors program.

Admission to the Honors Program will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Any late enrolling or transfer student admitted to the Honors Program will be required to fulfill all Honors Program requirements.

Retention Requirements

Students will be required to maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average to remain in the College Honors Program. A student earning below a 3.0 cumulative GPA in any semester will not be eligible to participate in the program and may not apply for re-admission. In order to remain in good standing in the Honors Program, students will be required to maintain a minimum 3.3 cumulative grade point average. A student earning between a 3.0 and 3.3 GPA in a semester would be put on probation in the program. Under the terms of probation, a student would have two semesters in which to raise the cumulative grade point average to 3.3. During each of the two probationary semesters, the student's cumulative grade point average must improve. A student who fails to improve his or her cumulative GPA in each of the two probationary semesters and/or who fails to earn a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher by the end of the probationary period will not be eligible to participate in the program and may not apply for re-admission.

Students earning a grade of C or lower in more than one honors seminar course (HON 2XX seminar) will not be eligible to participate in the program and may not apply for re-admission.

Program Requirements

1. Academic component = total of 19 academic credits
 - a. HON100-Honors freshmen seminar-Introduction to interdisciplinary thinking
 - b. HON171- Honors composition
 - c. A minimum of three and a maximum of four HON interdisciplinary, team taught seminars
 - d. A minimum of 6 credits of "learning beyond" (LB) experience.
2. Social component:
 - a. Mandatory participation in the freshmen team building experience
 - b. Mandatory participation in at least one event (social, intellectual, or artistic) per semester.

*Students admitted to the honors program after their freshmen year are exempt from HON100 and HON171

All honors students: Please sign this form to confirm that you read and understand all of the Honors Program requirements. Submit one copy of the form to the director of the honors program and one copy to your advisor.

I understand and agree to all of the above requirements and am willing to abide by all of the rules and requirements.

Student Signature (Print name): _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Major Advisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director of Honors Program Signature: _____ Date: _____

Sample Courses and Curriculum

Honors seminars are designed to fulfill a part of Stevenson's core curriculum requirements, and as such, do not place an extra burden on students. Topics of the seminars change from one semester to another.

Four-Year Map of the Honors Program:



Figure 1: Honors students on a trip to NYC.

	<u>Year 1</u>	
Fall Semester		HON 100 HON 171
Spring Semester		HON 2XX Honors Seminar
	<u>Year 2</u>	
Fall Semester		HON 2XX Honors Seminar
Spring Semester		HON 2XX Honors Seminar
	<u>Year 3</u>	
Fall Semester		Honors Seminar
Spring Semester		Learning Beyond Requirement*
	<u>Year 4</u>	
Fall/Spring Semester		Learning Beyond Requirement*

Students will be required to take a minimum of three but no more than four Honors Seminars. It is recommended that students complete this requirement by the end of the second year.

Fall Freshmen Courses:

Fall Freshmen
HON 100- Honors Freshmen Seminar
1 credit

Course description:

This is a required first semester, one credit, course designed to introduce the honors students to the philosophy and requirements of the program. The course introduces the main elements of the program: the multi-disciplinary approach to learning and learning beyond traditional boundaries. This course provides the opportunity to engage in meaningful intellectual and social interactions.

Grade: pass/fail

Comments: restricted to honors students; counts toward fulfilling the LB requirement

Fall Freshmen
HON 171
Honors Effective Writing
3 Credits, Fall

Studies the theory and practice of the art of the essay, emphasizing the relation between style and voice and their effects on the reader. This course requires analytical reading and critical thinking, and includes instruction and practice in research methods and writing from sources.

Prerequisite(s): Acceptance into the University Honors Program. Required for Honors Program students.

Concurrent Course(s): Honors First-Year Seminar (1 Credit).

General Education: Writing Skills requirement (Honors).

*The Learning Beyond requirement is a minimum of 6 credits and includes research projects, internships, study abroad opportunities, student-designed projects and, for some majors, contracting with faculty in regular upper division courses.

Sample Honors Seminars:

Listed below are several honors courses that Stevenson University has offered to its honor students. These courses are always changing and new courses are added periodically.

HON216: Commerce, Culture, and the Classics

3 Credits

Course Description:

During this course students will survey and compare business practices in the marketplace during four stages in world history. They will create and design a commonplace book that chronicles an original character's daily life. Students learn to connect business practices and literary themes from the readings through written responses to "collision questions." In conclusion students will present a summary of one of the marketplace readings and facilitate classroom discussion (group project). Also during the course students will participate in a business ethics case study and discover ways in which business, literature and culture intersect through field trips and experimental learning.

HONORS: Ground Zero: Change Agents

3 Credits

Course Description:

A course examining the forces that conceived, destroyed, and re-envisioned the World Trade Center (WTC). Uses the WTC and the biographies of three principal change agents associated with it—Robert Moses (urban planner), Ayman al-Zawahiri (Islamic fundamentalist), and Daniel Liebeskind (architect)—as centerpieces to see how larger societal forces shape periods of intense historical change; how political, economic, and cultural entrepreneurs maneuver within these forces and changes to exploit the resulting opportunities; and how architecture reflects and contributes to these developments.

HONORS: Sex and Gender in Film

3 Credits

Course Description:

In terms of how we view sex and gender, does art imitate life, or does life imitate art? And what, exactly, are the differences and similarities between "sexes" and the "genders?" In this course, Barbara Smith, Chair of Villa Julie's Psychology Department, and Chris Reed, Assistant Professor of Film and Video, propose to guide students through the tangled pathways of how we deal with sex and gender in our society, and how, in particular, we deal with them in the premiere popular culture formats of our day, namely film and television. Beyond developing their critical faculties, students will be introduced to the skills necessary to complete their own films - fiction or documentary - in which they can explore their views on sex and gender.

HONORS: History of Film Advertising

3 Credits

Course Description:

In this course, *History of Film Advertising*, we will investigate movie trailers and movie posters through an historical survey of film, advertising, and poster design. Students are introduced to the technical skills needed to create their own movie posters and trailers. Students will design and complete their own film advertising campaign based on the concepts identified by screening trailers, looking at movie posters, and exploring other film advertising techniques. Students will also examine the historical context of art history, film technology, and socio-political events, and write two research papers on topics relevant to this study. Because of the dual art and history components of this course, it can count for either history or fine arts credit (but not both).

Learning Beyond Opportunities

College is a time to explore the world and discover your values, interests, skills, and abilities. At Stevenson University, classroom experiences will provide you with knowledge and skills, while [Learning Beyond](#) will allow you to apply what you've learned in the outside world. The pairing of Learning Beyond and traditional, classroom-based learning greatly enhances a student's College experience.

Stevenson University and the Honors Program enthusiastically support this dynamic educational philosophy. We are confident that your learning beyond experience will provide you with enhanced career opportunities as well as personal and social growth.

Honors students will be able to apply for special funding to pay for various aspects of these learning beyond requirements. A prerequisite for applying for funding will be completion of the honors seminar requirement (i.e., 3 honors seminars).

Honors students should work closely with their advisors to determine which LB opportunity best fits their interests and majors.

Listed below are examples of Learning Beyond opportunities:

[*Study Abroad*](#)

The Study Abroad Program at Stevenson University provides an educational experience that engages students in their personal, social, and intellectual growth by providing opportunities to explore and learn while studying outside the United States. The University's core values of responsibility, adaptability, integrity, respect, and striving for excellence in learning and life will be enhanced by immersion in another culture.

During this experience, students will foster understanding, appreciation, and respect for diversity. Students will broaden their horizons with the expectation of increasing their ability to live fully and successfully in an ever changing world.

The Stevenson University has all the tools you need to sign up for these great experiences.

Contact information: Barbara Vlasisavljevic, email: studyabroad@stevenson.edu

Figure 2: Pictures taken by an Honor student while studying abroad. Victoria Falls.



Figure 3: Picture taken by an Honor student while studying abroad. Debswana Jwanena Mine.



Learning Beyond Opportunities

Service Learning

The goal of Service Learning at SU is to educate students by integrating academics with community service.

Service learning is a way for students to try new things, connect campus and community, see course content from a different angle, and reflect upon possibilities for personal and social change.

Skilled in relating theory and practice and grounded in civic responsibility, students who participate in service learning build connections and enhance employment opportunities after graduation.

In a few courses, service learning is an integral part of the class. In others, a faculty member may choose to offer this valuable opportunity to students through the One Credit Option, a chance to earn an extra credit for a course-related service project.

Contact information: Alan Penczek, email: apenczek@stevenson.edu



Figure 5: Honors Students at a meeting.



Figure 4: Honors Students at a museum.



Figure 6: Honors Students on a trip.

Learning Beyond Opportunities

Learning Beyond Opportunities in the Science and Mathematics Division

The Science and Mathematics Division offers many learning beyond opportunities at all levels of the curriculum. In addition to one credit learning beyond options that are associated with several of the courses at the 100-, 200- and 300-level, there are full courses that offer learning beyond experiences in the sciences. Research courses at the 200- and 300-level in the biology, chemistry and math departments provide an opportunity for students to conduct independent research with a faculty member. At the senior level, students can choose to complete a 5 or 9 credit research or internship capstone. In the research capstone, students conduct research in the laboratory of a faculty mentor, either at Stevenson University or in an off-campus laboratory. Students in the internship capstone gain workforce experience in a field related to their future interests. In all of these experiences, students engage in the professional activities of scientists, including writing scientific articles, poster presentations, group meeting and journal club presentations. Science and math students have conducted research or worked at a variety of places, including the University of Maryland Medical, Dental and Pharmacy Schools, Johns Hopkins University, National Institute on Aging, Athena Environmental Sciences, BD Diagnostics, CVS, United Parcel Service, Maryland Transportation Administration, Baltimore VA Medical Center, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the Center of Marine Biotechnology, the Institute of Human Virology and Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

These are just a couple of the Learning Beyond opportunities Stevenson University offers. For more information and more options, log on to the Stevenson University website.

Social Events

The Honors Program council and students like to stay active and social. The council plan many events for the students so they can get involved, meet new people, and most importantly have some fun.

Some of the events include:

- Freshmen team building
- Trips to see plays and movies
- Ice cream socials
- Study Breaks

These are just a few social events that the Honors Program offers. We are always looking for new ideas and any help with these events is always welcome.



Figure 7: Halloween costume contest with the Honors students.



Figure 8: Honors Students at an art gallery.

Honors Program Staff Information

Dr. Ora Freedman, Professor of Economics and the Director of the Honors Program

ofreedman@stevenson.edu

Kelly Farmer, Associate Director of Admissions

kmfarmer@stevenson.edu