

Honors College Seminars: Proposal Guidelines

The Honors College invites faculty to propose honors level seminars for inclusion in the course offerings in the Honors College. These seminars will be one-semester courses (typically three units) and will be designed to enable students and faculty to examine areas that are not usually part of regular departmental offerings. Seminars in the Honors College should provide a robust and collegial discussion environment that is intellectually demanding. These seminars should support increasingly independent learning as well as application of disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and methods to the larger academic, local, national, or global community.

The Honors College is especially interested in **Lower level Honors seminars** that allow for in-depth study of fundamental issues, ideas, topics or problems. Emphasis for these seminars should be on developing and strengthening skills important to success in Honors and undergraduate education, including oral and written communication skills, reading skills, critical and creative thinking, civic engagement, etc. These seminars should satisfy a specific General Education requirement. The Honors College is also interested in reviewing proposals for **Upper level Honors seminars** that are designed to deepen knowledge about a particular intellectual issue and demonstrate the interconnectedness of academic disciplines. These seminars may incorporate moral or ethical thinking, problem-solving components, and independent writing projects as part of a culminating activity. These seminars should be designed to satisfy departmental requirements and will require approval from the home department.

Suggested honors components to coursework include the following:

- an emphasis on primary texts over secondary works
- a project that helps to broaden the disciplinary/interdisciplinary approach of the course
- student organized events outside the classroom that build on the course material and enhance the educational experience for students in the class or other students on campus
- student participation in broader community or regional events related to course
- student research on pedagogical or research methods (suggesting or implementing some of these innovative approaches during the course of the semester)
- student taught sessions or portions of sessions
- more advanced disciplinary methods

This list is not comprehensive. To the contrary, the Honors Curriculum Committee welcomes other ideas and suggestions, as well as innovative approaches to pedagogy and course structure.

Meeting(s) of interested faculty:

Departments and individual instructors interested in developing an honors level course for the Honors College may contact the Dean of the Honors College

Timeline

Given University scheduling needs, honors proposals should reach the Honors College Curriculum Committee ASAP for best consideration for the next academic year.

Applications must include the following

1. A brief description of the content and structure of the course with an explanation of what about this course makes it an honors seminar.
2. An explanation of how this course provides an intellectually demanding environment; supports student-centered learning; emphasizes independent learning, student leadership and civic engagement; and develops a “unique” learning experience.
3. A preliminary syllabus that has the following:
 - a. a short course description with an explanation of why this is an honors seminar
 - b. clear statement of course objective(s) / goals
 - c. teaching strategies/pedagogies to be employed (e.g., discussion, groupwork, debate)
 - d. essential readings, texts and course materials (primary source readings required)
 - e. course requirements and means of assessment/evaluation (be specific; writing is required)
 - f. an attendance policy
 - g. an explanation of grading standards
4. A statement from the department approving the course as a departmental honors course (if appropriate).
5. The name(s) of the instructor(s) teaching the course, along with preferences for semester, day(s) of week, and time of day.

This form provides guidelines that departments may use in their evaluation of course proposals. Upon approval and recommendation of the department chair and College Dean, the Honors College Curriculum Committee will review course proposals for inclusion among the course offerings in the Honors College. The department Chair and the Dean of the Honors College will work together to provide for appropriate scheduling of any approved course.

Submission

These materials must be submitted by email, mail, or fax to: honors@towson.edu, or to The Honors College Curriculum Committee, Stephens Hall, Rm 302; Fax: 410-704-4916; Phone: 410-704-4677.