

HONORS COLLEGE

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Richard Badenhausen, Dean **Alicia Cunningham-Bryant**, Director of Fellowship Advising **Stephanie Santarosa**, Assistant Director of Honors, **Julie Stewart**, Assistant Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

The Honors College provides intellectually curious students who wish to challenge themselves in a unique learning community an opportunity to satisfy all of their college-wide general education requirements through a specially designed, alternative pathway. By completing 6-8 seminars from a menu of interdisciplinary, team-taught Honors seminars focused on primary texts and seminar discussion, students earn either an Honors certificate or Honors degree. Because of the focus on sharpening communication skills, engaging materials from diverse perspectives, and confronting challenging ideas across periods and cultures, Honors students are prepared to be articulate and responsible members of society and defenders of their own ideas. Students who join the Honors College via the lateral entry option may also earn an Honors certificate upon completion of 4 seminars. The Honors College is a longtime member of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) and the Western Regional Honors Council (WRHC).

Referred to by one higher education leader as “one of the best in the United States,” the Honors College at Westminster offers one of the most comprehensive stand-alone, interdisciplinary, team-taught Honors curriculums in the country. The Honors College offers dedicated advising to its approximately 230 students and it houses Westminster’s Fellowship Advising Office, which serves the entire campus. Approximately thirty professors from a wide range of disciplines regularly teach in the Honors College, and eight of them have won the Gore Excellence in Teaching Award, Westminster’s most prestigious award for faculty. Honors students are known for their service on and off campus, regularly serving as captains of athletic teams, student government leaders, and editors of Westminster publications like *The Forum* and *Ellipsis*, as well as volunteering at many local non-profits.

Faculty

Richard Badenhausen, Professor (Honors)
Russ Costa, Associate Professor (Honors/Neuroscience)
Alicia Cunningham-Bryant, Associate Professor (Honors)
Connie Etter, Assistant Professor (Honors/Justice Studies)
Nicholas Pollock, Assistant Professor (Honors/Geology)
Julie Stewart, Associate Professor (Honors)

[View Honors Courses](#)

Westminster College-Wide Learning Goals

- **Critical Thinking** Students will comprehensively explore issues, ideas, artifacts, events, and other positions, before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.
- **Creativity** Students will combine or synthesize new ideas, practices, or expertise in original ways that are characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking.
- **Collaboration** Students will demonstrate self-awareness, understanding of effective group dynamics, and project management skills.
- **Communication** Students will communicate ideas to audiences in oral, visual, and written forms to establish knowledge, to increase understanding, or to advocate for a particular position.
- **Global Responsibility** Students will (i) employ practices informed by social responsibility across the spectrum of differences and (ii) demonstrate knowledge of and evaluate solutions for, challenges affecting local, regional, and global communities.

Admission to the Honors College

Students expressing a desire to enroll in the Honors College will be evaluated according to the following criteria: high school GPA and rigor of coursework, interest in the unique approach to learning in Honors, and the quality of a written statement. Students who wish to be in the program are encouraged to secure an application from the Honors College or Westminster’s Admissions staff. Students who wish to transfer into the Honors College via the lateral entry pathway will have previous college work taken into consideration during the admissions process. Questions concerning the application process should be directed to the Dean of the Honors College.

Benefits of Participating in the Honors College

- *Academic distinction:* the Honors designation on the student’s transcript shows graduate schools and employers that they have achieved academic success in rigorous classes. The challenging, comprehensive curriculum also helps students grow as thinkers, writers, and speakers.
- *Small class size:* Honors classes have an intimate, seminar-style feel and allow for close student-professor interactions and mentoring, an important benefit when students require personal and informed letters of recommendation for jobs and graduate school.
- *Excellent faculty:* eight Honors professors have won the college’s Gore Excellence in Teaching award, Westminster’s top recognition for faculty.
- *Enhanced support, advising, and mentoring:* First-year Honors students attend an early, supplemental day of orientation activities to help ease the transition to college life, receive specialized advising from trained advisors, and meet weekly as a cohort during the fall term. Finally, incoming Honors students are grouped with peer mentors—upper-class Honors students with extensive experience at Westminster—who can help guide them during their first year at college.
- *Interdisciplinary approaches:* the interdisciplinary nature of Honors seminars brings students and two faculty from different departments together to ensure an exciting class atmosphere that prepares students for the interdisciplinary approach of most top graduate programs and professional fields. It also helps students engage in a higher order of thinking because conversations across difference are especially challenging.
- *Alternative Gen Ed experience:* the Honors curriculum offers a unique learning experience that goes beyond the standard college general education classes in a series of specially designed seminars. Honors also offers students an efficient, flexible pathway through gen ed requirements that frees up time to fit in double majors, multiple minors, electives, extracurricular activities, intensive research projects, leadership opportunities, and other enhanced academic experiences.
- *Research opportunities:* the seminar-style approach to learning, the emphasis on writing and research in classes, and the program’s support of outside research allow students to investigate their academic interests more fully and create opportunities for the presentation or publication of their work. The program also awards two substantial independent summer research grants annually to Honors students.
- *Sense of community:* Honors students take core classes together and interact with Honors faculty and students through other academic and social events. This interaction helps establish a sense of belonging to the college community. The Honors College is housed in Nunemaker Place. Built in 1977, this architecturally striking building provides Honors students and faculty with a variety of distinctive spaces, including staff offices, meeting areas, and

reading and study spaces. Located next to beautiful Emigration Creek, Nunemaker opens out onto a tree-lined patio where students and faculty can eat lunch, read, and relax.

- *Special study abroad opportunity:* Westminster's Honors College is a member of the Principia Consortium, which gives students access to a unique Honors educational experience at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. Honors students also have access to scholarship support for MTSE classes.
- *Access to supplementary resources:* these resources include the Honors College listserv, Student Honors Council discussion series, the Honors College newsletter, and special enriched learning experiences such as attendance at cultural events. Funding to attend and give papers at academic conferences, leadership training opportunities like the Student Honors Council, special recognition opportunities like the Honors seminar book awards, and opportunities to participate in special meetings with distinguished visiting scholars and lecturers are also included.
- *Fellowship Advising Office:* Westminster's Fellowship Advising Office, which serves the entire student body, is housed in the Honors College, ensuring that Honors students are introduced to a wide range of post-graduate fellowship opportunities like the Rhodes, Fulbright, Marshall, and Truman scholarships among many others.
- *Commitment to diversity and inclusion:* The Honors College is guided by a robust three-year diversity strategic plan. The Honors College was the first academic unit on campus to conduct a diversity climate survey and is a leader on campus in inclusive admissions strategies.

Participation in Honors Courses by Non-Honors College Students

Any Westminster undergraduate in good standing with a 3.5 GPA or higher is eligible to enroll in 300- and 400-level Honors seminars. The Honors College is an active part of the larger college community and welcomes the energy, intellect, and diversity that students from different disciplines across the campus bring to Honors. Non-Honors College students enrolling in Honors seminars should check with their program chairs, since these classes will sometimes fulfill certain requirements in a student's own major. Participation in 200-level Honors seminars is restricted to students in the Honors College.

Criterion for Remaining in the Honors College

If an Honors student falls below a 3.0 Westminster cumulative GPA, a probationary period of two semesters will be used to allow the student to return to the minimum GPA standard for continued participation. Students who do not reach the 3.0 threshold after one year may petition the Honors Council to continue taking Honors classes.

Honors Degree Requirements

Students may complete the requirements below and be awarded a certificate recognizing this achievement contingent on Westminster graduation. Only one of the courses in Section III may be taken as credit/no credit (*does not apply to HON 201 or 202*). Upon completion of the Honors degree, major and/or minor, and graduation requirements, students will receive either an Honors Bachelor of Fine Arts, Honors Bachelor of Arts, or Honors Bachelor of Science depending on their major program of study.

Requirement Description	CH	PREQ
I. World Language Requirement	12 or equivalent proficiency	
Honors Degree recipients must complete 3 semesters of college-level instruction in a single world language or the equivalent. Requirement can be satisfied by coursework or proof of proficiency. For example, an incoming student who begins in Spanish III and successfully completes that course will have satisfied the requirement. (May term study abroad trips may not be used to satisfy this requirement.) Honors students may also demonstrate proficiency through 12 hours of CLEP, FLATS, or other proficiency exam credit in a single language. All coursework that meets this requirement must be taken for a letter grade.		
II. Lower Division Gateway Courses	8	
HON 201 Welcome to Thinking I 4 HON 202 Welcome to Thinking II 4 These courses are taken consecutively in fall and spring terms, respectively.		
III. Lower Division Courses	20	
Select five courses from: HON 211 Global Welfare & Justice 4 HON 212 Arts & Performance 4 HON 213 Environments & the Space of Art 4 HON 221 Science as Knowledge 4 HON 222 Science, Power & Diversity 4 HON 231 Human Culture & Behavior 4 HON 232 Data/Society/Decision-Making 4		

Requirement Description	CH	PREQ
IV. Additional Coursework	4	
Students must complete 4 credit hours of additional coursework from a 200-level Honors seminar listed above, a 300/400-level Honors elective seminar, or an Honors May term course.		
V. Senior Project/Thesis	2	
Completion of a senior project in the student's major for a minimum of 2 credit hours. Students whose majors employ a practicum, internship, exhibition, or recital as the senior capstone experience must include a significant written component in which they reflect on that experience. The nature of such projects will be determined in conjunction with the Dean of the Honors College and the student's major advisor. All students completing a thesis or senior project for the Honors Degree must fill out the thesis topic approval and completion forms, which are available on the Honors website, and present their completed work in a public setting such as a regional academic conference, Westminster's undergraduate conference, or some equivalent venue. consent of instructor		
VI. Honors Capstone	0-2	
Students completing senior projects in the major to satisfy requirements for the Honors Degree enroll in HON 403 during the semester(s) they are conducting that work. Students may take HON 403 for credit up to two (2) times. HON 403 Capstone Conversations 0-1		
Total Hours for the Honors Degree	46-48	

Honors Certificate Requirements – For Lateral Entry Students Only

Students who join the Honors College via the lateral entry option may complete four seminars in the Honors core sequence and be awarded a certificate recognizing this achievement contingent on Westminster graduation. *None* of these courses may be taken as credit/no credit.

Requirement Description	Credit Hours	Prerequisites
I. Lower Division Gateway Courses	10-12	
<i>A minimum of two WCore courses (6-8 credit hours) or similar general education courses from a two- or four-year institution are required.</i> <i>All lateral entry students take HON 203 upon entry to the program:</i> HON 203 Welcome to Thinking III (4)		
II. Lower Division Courses	12	
<i>Select three courses from:</i> HON 211 Global Welfare & Justice (4) HON 212 Arts & Performance (4) HON 213 Environments & the Space of Art (4) HON 221 Science as Knowledge (4) HON 222 Science, Power & Diversity (4) HON 231 Human Culture & Behavior (4) HON 232 Data/Society/Decision-Making (4)		
TOTAL HOURS FOR THE HONORS CERTIFICATE	22-24	

Honors Certificate Requirements – For Traditional Entry Students Only

Students may complete six seminars in the Honors sequence and be awarded a certificate recognizing this achievement (contingent on Westminster graduation). Only one of the courses in Section II may be taken as credit/no credit (*does not apply to HON 201 or 202*).

Requirement Description	CH	PREQ
I. Lower Division Gateway Courses	8	
HON 201 Welcome to Thinking I 4 HON 202 Welcome to Thinking II 4 These courses are taken consecutively in fall and spring terms, respectively.		
II. Lower Division Courses	16	
Select four courses from: HON 211 Global Welfare & Justice 4 HON 212 Arts & Performance 4 HON 213 Environments & the Space of Art 4 HON 221 Science as Knowledge 4 HON 222 Science, Power & Diversity 4 HON 231 Human Culture & Behavior 4 HON 232 Data/Society/Decision-Making 4		
Total Hours for the Honors Certificate	24	

Honors Seminars Across Departments/Programs

Honors seminars do not satisfy major/minor requirements or prerequisites except when completed by an Honors College student in the following cases:

- HON 201 *Welcome to Thinking I* may be substituted for HIST 102 or 110 required for the [History](#) program while HON 202 may substitute for HIST 123 or HIST 111 as a requirement for the program.
- HON 201 and 202 *Welcome to Thinking I & II* may be substituted for the WCFAH and Writing Emphasis prerequisites required for ENGL 221, 222, and 223 in the [English](#) program.
- HON 201 and 202 *Welcome to Thinking I & II* may be substituted for two of the three lower-division courses required for the [Philosophy](#) program. HON 203 *Welcome to Thinking III* may be substituted for one of the three lower-division courses required for the Philosophy program.
- HON 211 *Global Welfare and Justice* may be substituted in place of PLSC 106 *Explorations in Politics* as a lower-division requirement for the [Political Science](#) program.
- HON 212 *Arts and Performance* may be substituted for THTR 221 *The Yogic Experience* as a lower-division requirement for the [Theatre](#) program.
- HON 213 *Environment and the Space of Arts* may count as an elective for the [Environmental Studies](#) program.
- HON 222 *Science, Power, and Diversity* may be substituted for PHIL 216 *Ethical Issues in Health and Healthcare* as a required prerequisite for the [Public Health](#) major.
- HON 222 *Science, Power, and Diversity* or HON 231 *Human Culture and Behavior* may be substituted for a WCSBS course option and prerequisite required for the [Public Health](#) and [Nursing](#) majors, respectively.
- HON 232 *Data/Society/Decision-Making* may be substituted for DATA 110 *Explorations in Data Science* required for the [Data Science](#) program or DATA 150 *Data and Society* required for the [undergraduate business core](#). Please note that this substitution may not apply well to [Economics](#) or [Marketing](#) as the programs strongly recommend DATA 220 in their undergraduate business core.
- HON 201 or 202 *Welcome to Thinking I or II*, respectively, may be substituted for the WCore Writing Emphasis and/or prerequisite required for the nursing majors.