

Honors Program Policies and Procedures
National Park College
Updated October 22, 2019
NP.EDU/HONORS

I. Mission

The mission of the National Park Honors Program is to provide high achieving students unique academic, social, and community service opportunities that will prepare them for future academic and career success. The Honors Program is committed to offer an educational experience that fosters intellectual curiosity, collaboration, and the tools needed to create effective leaders and lifelong learners.

II. Vision

Through careful selection of faculty, students, curricula, and events, the NPC Honors Program aims to create a dynamic and innovative culture of learning on campus. From attracting and retaining students, to providing a successful foundation for future academic achievement, the college envisions the Honors Program as the foundational step in creating bringing positive change to our campus and the community it serves.

III. Values of the Program

- Create a culture that values academic and personal honor, integrity, and ethical behavior
- More academic rigor and intellectual stimulation for our high-performing students
- Exposure to an interdisciplinary curriculum that will broaden student knowledge, cultural awareness, and deepen academic skills
- Prepare our students to be more competitive when applying to four-year programs, and better prepared for success once enrolled
- Develop critical thinking skills, research and writing skills
- Foster independent thinking amongst our students
- Encourage a more collegial and richer college experience with other students and faculty
- Provide opportunities for greater financial, academic, and social opportunities on and off campus
- Create personalized service learning and volunteer opportunities to enhance student interest
- Incorporate innovative and engaging faculty and staff into the program

IV. Staffing and Structure of the Program

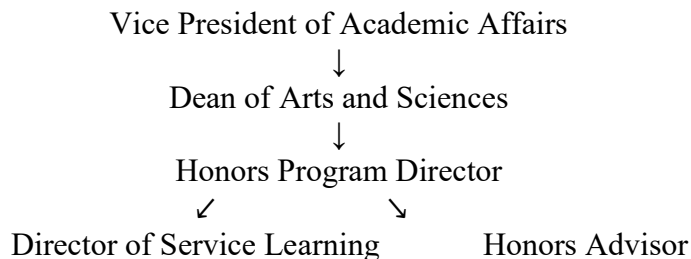
The NPC Honors Program will be directed by the Honors Program Director.

Honors Program Director:

The Honors Program Director will be responsible for all facets of the Honors Program. This position will include a stipend for service as Director. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Program Budget
- Recruiting
- Candidate Selection
- Faculty Management
- Curriculum
- Program Assessment
- Organization of Events
- Maintenance of Student Records
- Communication and Marketing of the Program

The Honors Program Director reports directly to the **Dean of Arts and Sciences**. The organizational hierarchy is as follows:



V. Honors Faculty

All Honors Program faculty that teach Honors-specific courses will be selected based upon a proven record of teaching excellence and with consent of their supervising Division Chair. All Honors credit conferred through contract coursework with regular faculty must be approved by the Honors Director. There is no titular change or financial compensation for being considered Honors “faculty.” This designation merely reflects the informal process of ensuring the highest-level of instruction at NPC is available to our Honors students.

VI. Honors Advisory Committee

As the Honors program grows, it is recommended that a committee of faculty, staff, and community members be formed to meet regularly with Honors students to discuss procedures, plan events, garner student feedback, etc. within the program. A committee of four (4) advisors, excluding the Director, should be assembled. It is recommended that the Honors Committee meet at least once per semester. These meetings should be made open and available to all Honors students if possible, or at least have some student representation. This is a student-driven program, and student input is vital to its success.

VII. Honors Admissions

The Honors Program is a four-semester program of study. Therefore, all incoming Honors Program students are recommended to be first-time college students. Exceptions to this recommendation may be made solely at the Director's discretion. Strong preference will be given to students who are exceptional in one or more of the following categories:

- Service to National Park College
- Commitment to Community Service
- Outstanding Artistic, Creative, or Musical Talent
- Exceptional Talent in a Specific Academic Area
-

All **incoming students** must meet **ONE** of the following requirements for admission:

- 22 or better composite ACT score
- 3.3 or better overall high school GPA
- 103+ Accuplacer writing score
- 1100 SAT score

To **apply** to the Honors Program, go to NP.EDU/HONORS and complete the following:

- NPC online application for admission
- Honors Program online application

Any **currently enrolled student** at National Park College, or **transfer student**, may apply for admission to the Honors Program after the successful completion of at least 12 hours of college coursework. Current students who are selected for the Honors Program must complete ALL academic requirements of the program to receive an Honors Diploma, regardless of how many existing credit hours they have previously completed.

To apply to the Honors Program as a current or transfer student, the following is required:

- NPC online application for admission (if transfer)
- Honors Program online application
- Contact Information for Two References
- Overall GPA of 3.25 for college coursework
- Reasonable progress towards completion of chosen degree or certificate program

Every application must be complete before review, and admission is based on a subjective assessment of each student's application materials by the Honors Program. No student, regardless of academic achievement, is guaranteed acceptance. All decisions by the Honors Program are final and not subject to appeal.

VIII. Honors Curriculum

Required Honors coursework for all students must include

Honors Orientation (prior to first semester)

Capstone Project (graduating term only)

4 Honors Seminars or Internships

Two Honors Contract Courses

80 Hours or More of Volunteer Work

Honors Seminar (4 required) courses form the centerpiece of the Honors Program curriculum. These allow students the opportunity to experience specific topics far more in-depth than in the typical classroom setting. The seminars are designed to be exciting and experiential, and the topics rotate frequently. There are three categories of Honors Seminar courses:

Honors Seminar I

Honors Seminar II

Honors Seminar III

Topics in the Fine Arts and Humanities

Topics in the Social Sciences

Topics in STEM and Health Sciences

Students must take four (4) of the Honors Seminar courses to graduate with the Honors Diploma.

Students may also receive Honors credit for completing an **Honors Internship**. Honors Internships, assigned with Director approval, are available to students if requested. These require a minimum of 32 contact hours during the semester for each internship placement. Internships can be paid or unpaid. Upon completion, students will receive honors credit.

Honors Contract (6+ hours required) courses are regular general education classes in which Honors students do additional projects, with instructor and program approval, in order to receive Honors credit. Students will submit a “contract” outlining the work agreed upon to receive Honors credit. These projects can be virtually anything, but must 1) advance the student’s understanding of a specific element of the course, 2) show creativity, critical thinking, and quality work, and 3) ideally contain a service component. Students are encouraged to do these projects in courses that pertain to their academic interest if possible.

A “B” grade must be attained to grant Honors credit. If a “C” or lower grade is made, the student will still be awarded regular class credit. Two Honors Contract courses, for a total of 6+ hours, are required for completing the Honors Diploma. Please see the Honors Program webpage for course contracts.

The **Capstone Project** may consist of a written/oral presentation, a community service project, a creative endeavor, etc. and will be guided by a faculty advisor. All projects must be approved by the Honors Program before work begins. Ideally, there will be some service component to the project's execution. We recommend that students begin planning for the Capstone as early as possible in order to ensure completion during their graduating semester. Approval forms are also located on the website. This course is a requirement for graduation with an Honors Diploma.

Students must be enrolled full time. The Honors Program Director may wave this requirement in special circumstances.

Volunteerism and Service Learning—80 Hours for Completion

All Honors students are required to complete **80 hours** of volunteer work to complete the Honors degree requirements. This is roughly 20 hours per semester, though summer service may count towards the 80 hour total. The goal is to align student interest with placement in the community, so make sure to speak with the Honors Director of Service Learning for options. Volunteerism must be professional or charitable, and not promote specific political or religious affiliations. All volunteer work must be unpaid. Group, cohort, and partnered projects will be allowed with approval by the Honors Program.

Honors Graduate Diploma

Transcripts of students who successfully complete all Honors requirements and all other requirements for their chosen degree plan will note that they are an "Honors Graduate." They will also receive an Honors Program medallion which they may wear at graduation as part of their regalia.

Honors Participant Diploma

Transcripts of students who successfully complete at least one semester in the Honors Program, all other requirements for their chosen degree plan, and at least one of the requirements for graduation will note that they are an "Honors Participant." They will also receive an Honors Program medallion which they may wear at graduation as part of their regalia.

IX. Program Maintenance Requirements

Students must graduate with an overall 3.25 GPA to receive the Honors Diploma. During their coursework, any student that drops below a 3.0 GPA for any fall or spring semester will not be eligible for additional Honors Program funds the following semester. If a student drops below a 2.0 GPA for any fall or spring semester, they will be dropped from the Honors Program, and will no longer be eligible for participation in Honors events, have access to Honors facilities, or receive any additional Honors stipends. If a student cannot maintain the necessary requirements of the program, they may receive a standard diploma upon graduation. Any Honors credit received may still be noted on their official transcript.

X. Active Participation

In order to remain in the Honors Program each student must demonstrate active participation in the program each fall and spring semester. Active participation during summer semesters is encouraged but optional. Any student who fails to actively participate in any fall or spring semester may be removed from the program. Active participation will be achieved by meeting **one** or more of the following criteria.

Successful Completion of at Least One Honors Seminar or Honors Internship

Successful Completion of at Least One Honors Contract Course

Successful Completion of at Least Twenty Hours of Approved Volunteer Work

Substantial Progress (as determined by the Honors Director) Towards the Completion of an Honors Capstone Project

Exceptions might be made for Honors Students who are dealing with serious challenges or who have already completed most of the requirements for an Honors Diploma. If a student desires an exception, they must contact the Honors Director and provide compelling evidence they deserve an exception. All removal decisions are subject to appeal to the Dean of Students.

XI. Code of Conduct

Honors students should display exemplary behavior, possess excellent interpersonal skills, and represent the program and college appropriately both on-campus and off-campus. Any student who has participated in personal or academic conduct that would reflect poorly on the Honors Program or NPC will be removed from the program. Should a student wish to appeal the removal, they may file a formal request with the Dean of Students at NPC.