

Missouri Valley College
Honors Program Handbook
[Updated 2022]

Table of Contents

Mission and Description.....	2
Student Learning Outcomes.....	2
Admission Requirements and Process.....	3
Advantages of Participation.....	3
Curriculum.....	4
Writing Intensive	
General Education substitutions	
Foreign Language or Study Abroad Requirement	
Contract Projects	
Thesis	
Continuing in the Program.....	8
Repeating Honors Program Courses.....	8
Contact Information.....	8
Appendix A: Contract Course Form.....	9
Appendix B: HN 400 Proposal Rubric.....	10
Appendix C: HN 485 Thesis Rubric.....	11

Mission

The MVC Honors Program promotes intellectual inquiry and advanced study for outstanding students who seek additional academic challenges.

Description

Students take Honors seminars in which they engage with primary texts as a means of understanding the historical development of significant movements in thought. As a means of acquiring multicultural knowledge, students take a foreign language, study abroad, or complete a contract course in Core 2A. The program encourages deeper exploration of particular disciplines through Honors contract classes, service learning, and an Honors thesis in the student's major.

Four-Year Honors Program:

- HN 100: Intro to Honors (1 credit)
- 5 Honors seminars (to replace 5 core Gen. Ed. courses)
- 2 contract projects in the major
- Study abroad/6-credits foreign language/contract course from the Study Abroad Alternative List
- HN 400: Independent study/thesis proposal (1 credit)
- HN 485: Honors thesis (1 credit)

Two-Year Honors Program for AA-Transfer/Junior Start:

- HN 300: Intro to Honors (1 credit)
- 2 Honors seminars of the student's choice
- 2 contract projects in the major
- Study abroad/6-credits foreign language/contract course from the Study Abroad Alternative List
- HN 400: Independent study/thesis proposal (1 credit)
- HN 485: Honors thesis (1 credit)

*Students may replace one Honors seminar with an Honors section of a General Education course.

Student Learning Outcomes--Program

1. Demonstrate effective communication skills (Area 2: Written Communication) (HN 190)
2. Implement effective information literacy skills (Area 2: Written Communication) (HN 190)
3. Demonstrate connections between ethical frameworks and practical issues (Area 6: Humanities and Fine Arts, Group 2) (HN 490)
4. Identify and apply basic concepts of science (Area 4: Natural Science) (HN 290)

5. Demonstrate critical understanding of perspectives on what it means to be human. (Area 1: Social and Behavioral Science) (HN 390)
6. Articulate the significance of artistic expression and the creative process within society. (Area 6: Humanities and Fine Arts, Group 3) (HN291)

Admission Requirements:**First-time Freshmen:**

Applicants should have earned a minimum combined ACT score of 24 or a combined Critical Reading and Math SAT score of 1090*.

Current Students:

Students who have completed 15-30 hours of coursework with a GPA of 3.5 or above at any accredited college or university are also invited to apply for admission. These students can complete the full four-year program in three years by condensing the last two years of coursework into one year, they may choose to stay another year, or they may complete a two-year program beginning the junior year.

Students Transferring with an AA degree and current MVC rising Juniors:

Students who transfer to MVC with an Associate of Arts degree and a 3.5 or higher GPA or current MVC sophomores with a 3.5 or higher GPA may apply to complete the 2-year Honors Program.

Applying to the Honors Program

1. Complete the online MVC application for admission
2. Complete the online application form for the Honors Program
3. Write a 300-400 word essay that explains why you are interested in the Honors Program and submit it to honors@moval.edu.

*If the minimum ACT or SAT score is not met, students can petition the Honors Program Director for admission. In addition to the application essay, these students should provide evidence that they will succeed in Honors (e.g. high GPA, rigor of high school courses, letters of recommendation from teachers).

Applications will be reviewed and students accepted on a space-available basis.

Advantages of Participation

- Small classes designed and taught by Honors faculty
- Opportunities to enhance and refine writing skills by working closely with faculty
- Professional development opportunities with visiting scholars
- Field trips and hands-on learning opportunities

- Workshops for conference proposals, internship applications, and graduate school applications
- Service learning opportunities
- Special recognition at graduation and convocation
- 25% scholarship for study abroad (maximum of \$1500), maximum of one per student
- Extra \$20 printing money each academic year
- Priority housing beginning sophomore year
- Priority registration for courses each semester
- Overdue fines waived for Murrell Library materials (does not apply to items borrowed through Quest or MOBIUS, and charges for items not returned at the end of the semester cannot be waived)

Curriculum

1. Introduction (1 course)

- **HN 100: Introduction to the Honors Program:** (1 credit) Interdisciplinary seminar for first-year Honors students. This course analyzes a broad theme (examples may include Love, War, Learning, Numbers, Beauty, Justice, or Stories) from multiple perspectives. Students will engage in multiple learning methodologies promoting development of critical thinking skills, oral and written communication skills, research skills, relationship building, and more. This course is designed for first semester Freshman Honors students.
- **HN 300: Introduction to the Honors Program:** (1 credit) Interdisciplinary seminar for Junior/AA-transfer Honors students. This course analyzes a broad theme (examples may include Love, War, Learning, Numbers, Beauty, Justice, or Stories) from multiple perspectives. Students will engage in multiple learning methodologies promoting development of a scholarly identity, deepening critical thinking skills, oral and written communication skills, research skills, relationship building, and preparation for professional or graduate work. This course is designed for transfer students and/or students who enter the Honors Program in their Junior year.

2. Honors Seminars: (3 credits each): a series of five Writing Intensive*, interdisciplinary classes in which students read primary texts. These courses replace 15 hours of General Education course requirements as specified below. ** *For those completing a two-year program beginning the junior year, two seminars are required.*

- **HN 190: Humanity and Stories:** How do stories teach us how to be human and how do they shape the world around us? This course investigates enduring questions of global human concern through literature, art, folklore, drama, and music. Topics addressed may include gender, race, leadership, knowledge, divinity, monstrosity, violence, and love through primary texts and individual research projects that synthesize primary and

secondary texts and emphasize explication and close reading. WI Prerequisite, HN 100/300 Spring WI Prerequisite, HN 100/300 Spring.

(replaces EN 160, counts towards Area 2: Written Communication)

Grade of C or higher required in HN190 in order to substitute for EN 160.

- **HN 290: Humanity and Science:** How do we know what we know about the physical world? How do numbers work? What is science? Drawing on relevant scientific concepts and methodologies, this course examines issues that emerge at the intersection of humanity's engagement with, and relation to, the natural world, through primary texts and individual projects. WI Prerequisite, HN 100/300 Fall.
(counts toward Area 4: Natural Science)
- **HN 291: Humanity and Creativity:** What is good? What is beautiful? What is creativity? The third course in the Honors sequence investigates questions about the interconnectedness of the social, political, economic, physical, and religious environment as related to the fine art disciplines of dance, music, theater, and visual arts through primary texts and individual projects that combine research and creative work. WI Prerequisite, HN 100/300 Spring.
(counts toward Area 6: Humanities & Fine Arts, Group 3)
- **HN 301. Honors Field Learning:** (2 hours) This field course offers hands-on research and/or service learning opportunities. Topics vary per instructor and term. Students engage in data collection, problem-solving, and research writing. Prerequisite: HN 100/HN 300. Intersession. Summer. (*elective*)
- **HN 390: Humanity and Society:** What is freedom? What is punishment? How and why do humans create, maintain, and undermine society? Topics addressed may include the self, human nature, freedom, and society through primary texts in psychology, sociology, economics, education, law, or history, and individual research projects. WI Prerequisite, HN 100/300 Fall.
(counts toward Area 1: Social & Behavioral Science)
- **HN 490: Humanity and Moral Responsibility** - Utilizing concepts and frameworks drawn from religious and/or philosophical approaches to ethics, this course examines the nature of human moral responsibility with regard to one or more contemporary issues through primary texts and individual research projects. Possible topics to be addressed may include but are not limited to, the ethics of healthcare systems, climate change, criminal justice/the death penalty, and economic justice. WI Prerequisite, HN 100/300 Spring.
(counts toward Area 6: Humanities and Fine Arts, Group 2)

**Writing Intensive: The five Honors Seminars follow the MVC Writing across the Curriculum criteria for WI courses. Students will be required to write at least 15 pages /4500 words per semester. Writing assignments should make up at least 50% of the overall grade. Instructors will*

be required to provide revision help and feedback on at least 5 pages/1500 words. Students should be given time to revise (after instructor feedback) before submitting those 5 pages of written work.

4. Students take 6 credits of foreign language OR complete a study abroad experience OR complete a contract course from the Study Abroad Alternative List.

5. Contract Projects:

Within their major, students will also choose two courses (junior or senior level) to complete additional work under “contract” with the faculty member. Students receive the same amount of credit for the course, but it will be marked on their transcript as an Honors Contract course. To determine if the faculty member wishes to “contract” with the student for Honors credit, the student should meet with the faculty member who will teach the course and request to take the course for Honors credit prior to registration. The faculty member and the student will work together to design the content that will constitute the Honors portion of the course and establish grading standards for the work.

Honors contract work should include:

- Research (whether original data collection, archival, or library research)
- Public presentation (Student Research Symposium or other conference, submission for publication or display, or in-class presentation)
- Significant student-faculty engagement throughout the semester
- Deeper professional or disciplinary engagement

Once the content has been designed, the student and faculty member should print and complete the Contract Course form (available on the MVC Honors Program website and as an Appendix to this document) and return a signed copy with a course syllabus to the Honors Director for approval. Failure to complete contract work will be reported by faculty to the Honors Director and the Registrar’s Office; students who fail to complete satisfactory contract work will not receive Honors credit for the course.

6. Honors Thesis: (2 credits)

- **HN 400: Independent Research** – 1 hour. Students work individually with a faculty member in their major to develop and write a thesis proposal for HN 485. Prerequisites: HN 100 or HN 300. Arranged.
- **HN 485. Honors Thesis** – 1 hour. Taken in conjunction with the Senior Seminar/Thesis in their major. Honors students produce a publishable quality piece of writing that they also formally present to the campus community. WI Prerequisites: HN 400. Arranged.

- **Other notes about the HN 400 and HN 485 Sequence:**
 - The HN400/HN485 sequence is intended to help further prepare students for work in the next stage of their career after graduating with a Bachelor's Degree. As such, the nature of the project and form that it takes might vary depending upon the expectations in the specific field of study. Thus the standard of "publication quality" might mean "performance quality" or other terms as relevant.
 - In all cases a 3-faculty member Thesis Committee is convened. The primary advisor and the student should decide who the extra 2 people are during the HN 400 semester. Near the end of the HN 400 semester, the 3 faculty and the student should meet to discuss the progress of the project. During the HN 485 semester, the other 2 faculty members should be available in a consultant capacity. At the end of the HN 485 semester, all three faculty collectively evaluate the quality of the completed thesis project.
 - The project is expected to be presented at the Student Research Symposium at the end of the semester.
 - For majors without a Senior Seminar / Senior Thesis course, the HN400/HN 485 sequence provides them the opportunity to develop an independent project relevant to their major.
 - For majors with a Senior Seminar / Senior Thesis course, the HN400/HN485 is intended to give the student the opportunity to expand upon what they are already doing for their major.
 - For a major with a 1-credit thesis, then HN400 is taken the semester before and the Major-Thesis / HN485 are taken concurrently the following semester for a total of 3 credits.
 - For a major with a 3-credit thesis, then HN400 is taken the semester before, the the Major Thesis course is taken the following semester and HN 485 is waived as an official course, but the 3-faculty member Thesis Committee should still be used to decide if the standards for HN 485 have been achieved. The expectation is still that the "publication quality" standard is achieved. A total of 4 credits is earned in this scenario.

Continuing in the Program

To continue participation in the MVC Honors Program, students must earn a grade of A or B in all Honors courses. Additionally, students must earn a 3.2 GPA their freshman year and maintain a cumulative 3.5 GPA or higher every year thereafter. Students must remain in good disciplinary standing at Missouri Valley College.

Students who fall below the GPA requirement or who receive a C or lower in an Honors course will be placed on one semester of probation for the Honors Program. A second C, or lower, or failure to raise the GPA to the required minimum, will result in dismissal from the Honors Program.

Requests to shift from the 4-year program to the 2-year program will be reviewed by the Honors Committee; approval may be contingent on engagement in Honors co-curricular activities, good standing in the program, and the student's plan for graduation.

Repeating Honors Program Courses

Students who earn a D or F in an Honors course will be allowed to repeat the course once to raise their GPA. They can resume the Honors sequence of courses after successfully passing that course. Repeating a course and earning a C would result in dismissal, as policies regarding continuing in the Program still apply.)

Contacts

honors@moval.edu

Dr. Brian C. Nolan, Director of the Honors Program, nolanb@moval.edu, 660-831-4127