

Missouri Valley College  
Honors Program Handbook  
2018-2019

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**Mission**

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

**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 classes in the major
- Study abroad/6-credits foreign language/contract course from Core 2A
- 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 classes in the major
- Study abroad/6-credits foreign language/contract course from Core 2A
- HN 400: Independent study/thesis proposal (1 credit)
- HN 485: Honors thesis (1 credit)

**Student Learning Outcomes--Program**

1. Demonstrate effective communication skills (Core IA) (HN 190)
2. Implement effective information literacy skills (Core IA) (HN 190)
3. Demonstrate connections between ethical frameworks and practical issues (Core IID) (HN 490)
4. Identify and apply basic concepts of science (Core IIIA) (HN 290)
5. Demonstrate critical understanding of perspectives on what it means to be human. (Core IIIB) (HN 390)
6. Articulate the significance of artistic expression and the creative process within society. (Core IIID) (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](mailto: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

(continued)

- Priority housing beginning sophomore year
- 25% scholarship for study abroad (maximum of \$1500), maximum of one per student
- Priority registration for courses each semester
- One coffee card per semester (worth \$5.00 toward hot drinks in the library)
- 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; Gen Ed SLOs: *Demonstrate effective communication skills; Implement effective information literacy skills*)

**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 Core 3A; Gen Ed SLO: *Identify and apply basic concepts of 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, theatre, and visual arts through primary texts and individual projects that combine research and creative work. WI Prerequisite, HN 100/300 Spring.  
(counts toward Core 3D; Gen Ed SLO: *Articulate the significance of artistic expression and the creative process within society*)
- **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 Core 3B; Gen Ed SLO: *Demonstrate critical understanding of perspectives on what it means to be human*)
- **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 Core 2D; Gen Ed SLO: *Demonstrate connections between ethical frameworks and practical issues*)

*\*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.*

*\*\*General Education substitutions: The following honors curriculum will substitute as general education core curriculum as listed below.*

*HN 190 Humanity and Stories for Core I A - EN 160*

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

*HN 290 Humanity and Science for Core 3A Scientific Knowledge*

*HN 291 Humanity and Creativity for Core 3D Art & Creativity*

*HN 390 Humanity and Society for Core 3B Reflection & Meaning*

*HN 490 Humanity and Moral Responsibility for Core 2D Ethics*

4. Students take 6 credits of foreign language OR complete a study abroad experience OR complete a contract course from Core 2A.

5. Contract classes (6 credits):

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 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. The Director should receive the forms by November 15 for spring semester classes and April 15 for fall semester classes.

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.

A committee of three professors—the major thesis professor plus two other faculty (at least one of whom must hold a terminal degree) of the student's choosing—will guide and evaluate the final thesis to determine the final grade for HN 485.

Eighty-five (85) percent of the grade for this course will be assigned based on completion of benchmarks in the formulation of a thesis. A rubric will be shared with you. Each student will expand the document they began in HN 400 under the guidance of their adviser. Though there is no specific page requirement, it should be understood that an honors thesis must meet certain standards (outlined in the rubric) whereby an argument is developed and is then sufficiently researched and defended not only in the document, but also in a verbal defense to the student's committee. It is likely that the completed thesis proposal will require at least 20 pages of text.

The remaining 15 percent of the course will be based on timely completion of weekly assignments for the course. These assignments will vary depending on the Tentative Schedule shared below. It is essential that the student meet each benchmark to ensure that the thesis is completed in time to share with the committee.

If a student earns an Unsatisfactory in any category from any member of his/her thesis committee, s/he will be required to revise and resubmit the relevant sections. The resubmission deadline will be determined by the major thesis advisor but will be due to the committee at least one week before the last day of regular classes.

### **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**

Dr. Claire Schmidt, Director of the Honors Program, [schmidtc@moval.edu](mailto:schmidtc@moval.edu), 660-831-4223



### MVC Honors Program Contract Course Form

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Course name and number: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

The student agrees to perform the work specified below. The work specified should involve the critical thinking skills and program learning outcomes central to the Honors Program. See page 6 of the Honors Handbook. All contract work should include research, on-going faculty mentoring, public presentation, and significant professional/disciplinary engagement. Attach additional documents if necessary.

Please print and sign form; submit to Honors Director by April 15 for fall courses and November 15 for spring courses.

Student's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Honors Program Director's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

*To be completed when final grades are submitted:*

I certify that \_\_\_\_\_ has satisfactorily completed the above work under contract and should receive Honors credit on their transcript.

Instructor's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

## Rubric for Honors Program Thesis Proposal (HN400)

		(quite weak)			(quite strong)
<u>Summary</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>
Synopsis of the lit review					
Brief outline of research proposed					
Anticipated results and their significance					
<u>Literature Review</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>
Persuasive case for research					
Evidence and references for research					
Proof that previous research has been understood					
<u>Research Proposed</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>
Why research idea is a good one					
What is going to be done/proven					
Details of proposed research					
Proof that the plan will work (if applicable)					
<u>Anticipated results</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>
Results will make a contribution to the problem					
<u>References</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>
Required format (MLA, APA, AP) used throughout proposal					
<u>Total points</u>					

Comments and Feedback:

HN 485 Honors Thesis Rubric\*

This rubric, when the average of the three committee members is figured, will determine the course grade for HN 485 (1 credit). Honors Program students must earn an A or B in all of their honors courses in addition to maintaining a 3.5 g.p.a.

If a student earns an Unsatisfactory in any category from any member of his/her thesis committee, s/he will be required to revise and resubmit the relevant sections. The resubmission deadline will be determined by the major thesis advisor but will be due to the committee at least one week before the last day of regular classes.

	<b>Unsatisfactory 1</b>	<b>Developing 2</b>	<b>Satisfactory 3</b>	<b>Outstanding 4</b>
<b>Research Question/Issue and Argument</b>				
Articulates an original, clearly defined, discipline-appropriate question/thesis statement				
Provides a contextual framework for the argument/Frames the question within a scholarly conversation; identifies the key scholars working in this area and explains the significance of this question				
Demonstrates the logical steps in the argument or lays out the methodology				
<b>Evidence</b>				
Uses primary and secondary sources or data appropriate to the discipline				
Logically interprets and synthesizes evidence/results into a coherent narrative that supports the thesis				
<b>Evidence continued</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory 1</b>	<b>Developing 2</b>	<b>Satisfactory 3</b>	<b>Outstanding 4</b>
Writer engages with and responds to possible criticism of his/her thesis.				

<b>Writing Style and Conventions</b>				
Language clearly and effectively communicates ideas				
Citation format is correct and appropriate to discipline				
Overall attention to detail--grammar and mechanics errors are minimal				
<b>Publishability of Thesis</b>				
Thesis is suitable for publication in a student journal or presentation at a student session				

\*rubric is adapted from Portland State University Honors College and University of Maine Honors College websites

Total Points \_\_\_\_\_

A= 36-40

B= 32-35

C=28-31

D=24-27

Comments/Suggestions: