

## HONORS PROGRAM

Program Director: Isabelle D. Cherney, Michael W. Barry Professor;

Assistant Director: Heather Fryer

Program Office: Hixson-Lied Science Building, G06

**Program Description:** The College of Arts and Sciences recently approved a new curriculum for its Honors Program and fully implemented that curriculum for the first time in the 2005-2006 academic year.

Rooted in the university's Christian, Catholic, and Jesuit traditions, the Honors Program relies on the belief, articulated by Pope John Paul II, that "the united endeavor of intelligence and faith will enable people to come to the full measure of their humanity." Its goal is to foster a community committed to the ongoing education of students and faculty members as fellow seekers for truth. The program seeks individuals of all faiths and backgrounds who are intelligent, well prepared academically, highly motivated, and academically adventurous. The curriculum then immerses these students in an academically rigorous but flexible program of study guided by a faculty mentor who is charged with paying special attention to the personal dimension of learning. The program ultimately understands itself as a fellowship of inquiry whose individual members have dedicated themselves without reserve to love of learning.

The new curriculum involves the following key elements:

**Foundational Sequence.** Honors students take three courses (9 credits) in their first three semesters that introduce them to the Christian, Catholic, and Jesuit intellectual traditions that lie at the heart of a Creighton education within the context of Western civilization and of the pluralistic world we inhabit.

**Sources and Methods Courses.** Honors students take five courses (15-20 credits) that induce them to think critically about information, assumptions, and arguments found in multiple forms of academic and cultural discourse. Several such courses are offered each semester in a range of academic disciplines.

**Honors Senior Perspectives Course.** Honors students are required to take a Senior Perspectives (SRP) course, and may select any such course offered in the College.

**Senior Independent Research Project.** Honors students are required to demonstrate their capacity for advanced, self-directed, individual work by completing an approved project within their major(s). They undertake these projects under the guidance of assigned faculty mentors and present their findings during a campus-wide "Honors Day."

**Mentoring and Learning Plan.** All of the above elements are incorporated into Learning Plans, developed individually by Honors students in close consultation with assigned faculty mentors. The mentoring process shapes Honors students into confident, independent learners who take active roles in their own education, and expect the most of themselves. Through their individualized Learning Plans, Honors students integrate their backgrounds and interests with the strengths and Mission of the University and the College. As a general principle, these four-year Learning Plans include courses distributed among the areas of fine arts, foreign languages, history, literature, mathematics, natural science, philosophy, social science, and theology. Students' Learning Plans are reviewed and approved by their faculty mentors and by the Program Director. While Honors students are expected, therefore, to excel in all areas that characterize a Creighton undergraduate education, fulfillment of these goals is determined on an individual basis rather than by the more structured curricular requirements that apply to other students.

Admission to the Honors Program is by invitation from the Honors Program Advisory Board (or the Honors Program Director or the Dean). Invitations to the Honors Program are sent to those students whose applications to the Creighton College of Arts and Sciences suggest that they would be strong candidates for admission to the Honors Program.

**Good Standing.** Once admitted to the Honors Program, students must continue to meet the following standards in order to remain in good standing in the program:

1. They must make acceptable progress towards fulfilling the requirements for an Honors Degree. Ordinarily, this means that they should have completed at least six (6) credit hours of Honors courses by the end of their freshman year, 12 by the end of their sophomore year, and 18 by the end of their junior year.
2. They must maintain a GPA of at least 3.3 for all courses taken at Creighton.
3. They must maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 for all Honors courses taken at Creighton. (This Honors-specific GPA will not be computed until a student has completed at least two Honors courses.)

Honors students found not to be in good standing will be notified and given one semester to remedy the situation. Failure to do so may result in their dismissal from the Honors Program.

**Limited Tuition Waiver.** Honors students in good standing are not charged tuition above and beyond the standard full-time tuition for a given semester, for up to 21 credit hours. Their eligibility to register for more than 18 hours is still subject to Dean's Office approval in the same way as other students'.

*For all HRS courses, please refer to page 411.*