

# BAYLOR HONORS PROGRAM: Curriculum Overview

Honors Program students take around two Honors courses per term: one (in most cases) specifically required, the other chosen by each student based on availability and interest. This balance of structure and flexibility is an important feature of the curriculum.

## *Honors Sections of Baylor Courses*

Honors classes adapt the content and pace of many required introductory courses to the distinctive culture of Honors students. Students may choose, from an array of options based upon course availability and their degree plans, their interests, and their schedules.

## *First-Year Seminars*

These small classes (maximum enrollment of 18) allow Honors freshmen to explore special topics with some of Baylor's best faculty. The seminars encourage the early acquisition of broad reading, critical thinking, and sound writing. They introduce students to the many opportunities for intellectual development in university life.

## *Great Texts Courses*

This sequence of courses focuses on the reading and discussion of classic texts, chosen primarily from the western intellectual tradition of liberal arts and sciences. Two Great Texts courses--spanning the ancient, medieval, and Renaissance periods in the West--are usually required as part of the freshman-sophomore curriculum in the Honors Program. The classes are small and count for one of the required literature classes on most degrees.

## *Colloquium*

This series of book discussions for sophomores and juniors has long been a highlight of the Honors Program. Students meet five times per semester, usually in small groups of 10-15, to discuss books and readings selected by Baylor professors and Waco civic leaders. This required Colloquium (2 credit-hours) introduce Honors Program students to a variety of classic and contemporary issues and to the unique perspectives of scholarly disciplines outside of their major fields.

## *Advanced Readings and Research*

During the junior year Honors Program students undertake two sections of Advanced Readings (1 credit-hour each), in order to explore specific topics with the guidance of a faculty mentor, usually in the Honors student's major field. These readings courses enable the student to define an area of research interest that will become the basis for the Honors thesis, which is discussed in occasional, structured workshops.

## *Honors Thesis Projects*

The capstone of the Honors Program is the preparation of a thesis that presents the results of original research, or an equivalent project, conducted under the direction of a faculty mentor. Four credit hours are devoted to the thesis project, which must be defended before a committee of faculty in the research field. Upon completion, the thesis demonstrates the student's mastery of the intellectual skills essential to critical inquiry and scholarship.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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