

# *The Lee Honors College Handbook*



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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide basic information about The Lee Honors College curricula, academic requirements, advising, and related concerns. We recommend that you consult the handbook first when you have questions about the honors college. While the handbook is intended to facilitate smooth and orderly progress toward completion of requirements, the information presented is subject to periodic revision and shall not be construed as a contractual or otherwise binding obligation of the college or university. All honors college students are students of the University and as such this handbook and the Lee Honors College operate under the policies, practices, and guidelines established for all undergraduate students at Western Michigan University. Students are strongly advised to consult regularly with the Lee Honors College advisor and website in order to stay abreast of relevant changes in college and university policies. Generally speaking, you will be governed by the Lee Honors College Handbook that was in effect at the time of your admission to the honors college.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Carl and Winifred Lee Honors College is to provide a lively, rigorous undergraduate experience for intelligent and highly motivated students. The honors college endeavors to provide the kind of community often associated with a small, liberal arts college but within the larger WMU community. The educational and cultural experiences are provided through challenging courses and extra-curricular activities that build capacity and inspiration.

## **ENDURING VALUES**

Four core values guide our academic and non-academic programming. The college endeavors to foster and facilitate civic engagement, lifelong learning, critical thinking and research and creative activities.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide academic and student-life experiences that foster individual and group development for highly motivated students.
2. To provide a challenging but supportive academic program that includes learning communities, unique learning experiences, study abroad, and research/creative activities.
3. To sponsor student-life activities in an inclusive social and learning community in conjunction with the Honors Student Association.
4. To maintain a residential-life program that supports the academic, social, and cultural goals of the College.
5. To ensure timely and caring advising and student support that encourages honors students to share their needs, concerns, and future goals.

# GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

All honors students must fulfill the general university requirements as well as the specific requirements of their majors and minors. Following completion of the academic requirements presented below, students are graduated from the Lee Honors College with recognition in the commencement program and a special notation on your diploma and academic transcripts.

In most cases students are able to fulfill both university requirements and honors college requirements at the same time by taking the **honors** section of courses. Honors courses must be taken for a letter grade; they may not be taken for credit/ no credit. **In addition to the specific requirements listed below, LHC students must achieve a G.P.A. of 3.25 or higher in order to graduate from the honors college.**

Students who enter with any status other than ‘first-semester freshman’ must fulfill the LHC requirements as described in their letter of acceptance to the honors college.

## Course Requirements

Students must take 6 honors courses to fulfill their course requirements. This can be done in a variety of ways.

Students must take either: (a) one or two designated clusters as listed in the Lee Honors College course catalog plus enough additional single honors classes to reach a total of six classes, or (b) six single honors classes. Labs required as part of a course, e.g. Biology 1100 or Psych 3980, do not count as separate courses. Students must enroll in a minimum of two honors courses at the 3000-5000 level. In most cases, freshman and sophomore students are allowed to take 3000 level honors courses. Students are expected to complete 4 honors courses in their first two years. Students may choose an independent research-oriented study, an internship or experiential learning experience, and/ or study abroad to satisfy this requirement. *Taking the honors thesis for credit does not constitute an upper-level course.*

## The Honors Thesis

In order to graduate from the Lee Honors College all students must complete, defend and submit a thesis project to the honors college. This normally is done in the semester you wish to graduate. It may, however, be done earlier with the permission of the thesis mentor. The thesis is due by the last day of the academic semester in which you graduate. Exceptions are possible with the approval of the associate dean.

The thesis must be chaired by a faculty mentor and approved by at least one other member knowledgeable in the discipline or an allied discipline (most thesis committees typically have a chair and two committee members). A copy of the final project must be filed with the Lee Honors College.

The nature of the thesis varies with your field of study and interests. For example, you may do a traditional research paper, a public performance, a work of art, a design project, or business plan, etc. While it is common for a student to choose a thesis topic in their major field, it is not essential. The thesis topic must be approved by the chair and members of your committee. For more information, please go to our website [www.wmich.edu/honors/](http://www.wmich.edu/honors/) current and click on thesis or make an appointment with the associate dean of the honors college.

The *Thesis Declaration Form* must be completed two semesters before you plan to graduate. This form is available at the honors college website. The associate dean will review all thesis declaration forms.

The *Request for Certificate of Oral Defense Form* should be completed approximately two weeks before you defend your thesis. This form is available at the honors college website.

Students have the option of receiving three hours of academic credit for the honors thesis. Those who wish to do so must complete an enrollment form for HNRS 4990, The Honors College Thesis. However, these credit hours cannot be used to fulfill an LHC course requirement.

The Undergraduate Studies Council approved the Honors College Thesis (HNRS 4990) as meeting the baccalaureate writing requirement. Therefore, students who complete the thesis *and register for HNRS 4990* can fulfill the baccalaureate level writing requirement.

While you may take the thesis for academic credit, you cannot earn *both* independent study credit *and* thesis credit for the same project.

## **Cultural Events**

As part of your freshman requirements, freshmen at the Lee Honors College attend **six cultural events** and submit a brief reflection of each performance (usually one paragraph is sufficient) using the LHC Cultural Event Submission form available on our website. Completed forms can be turned in at the information desk of the honors college or submitted electronically to leehonorscollege@wmich.edu.

Students in the College of Fine Arts are expected to choose cultural events outside of their major area of study.

Examples of cultural events include:

- plays, musicals, and serious films
- public speeches and presentations,
- lectures and programs sponsored by the Lee Honors College,
- concerts presented by the departments of Music and Dance,
- poetry readings or symposia presented by academic departments,
- films at WMU' s Little Theatre or Kalamazoo College' s foreign film series,
- plays presented by the Department of Theatre, and
- exhibitions at WMU' s exhibition halls or the Kalamazoo Institute of Art.

Should you have questions about the validity of the event you wish to attend, please call the honors college in advance and speak with an advisor. Do not assume simply because an event is held in Miller Auditorium that it automatically counts toward your cultural event requirements.

## **Independent Study Options**

The honors college encourages students to explore opportunities to conduct independent academic inquiry under the guidance of a faculty mentor. Students taking one of these courses will earn 3 credits toward their honors college requirements. Should the independent study take longer than one semester, the student may register for an additional 3 credit hours but these additional hours cannot be used to satisfy honors college course requirements. The appropriate forms for submitting proposals are available on the Lee Honors College website.

**HNRS 3990: Field Experience.** Three hours credit for an organized association with a person or agency involving work and learning activities related to a significant academic interest of the student.

**HNRS 4950: Individual Studies.** Three hours credit for a directed individual study lasting one or several semesters which explores subject matter or approaches to knowledge outside the usual course structure.

*In order to register for the above courses you are required to have completed at least two honors classes and have achieved sophomore status.*

## **Study Abroad**

We strongly encourage participation in a study abroad program if at all possible. We accept your study abroad experience, either through a WMU or other university approved program, as a substitute for **one** of your upper level honors courses.

The LHC has several scholarships available for those wishing to study abroad. Please visit our website or contact Dr. Nick Andreadis for more information and/ or to apply.

## **ADVISING**

Academic and career advising is an important benefit available to all honors students. Freshmen are **required** to attend Mandatory Freshman Advising in October during their first semester at WMU. Times for group advising will be announced via email. Following your freshman year, we expect you to visit your academic advisor in the honors college at least once a year.

Ms. Sue Oole and the Graduate Assistant are the academic advisors for all course-related advising.

Dr. Nick Andreadis is the advisor for thesis projects and graduate school, as well as the Dean's Summer Research Thesis Scholarship, The Carl and Winifred Lee Research Travel Scholarship, and the Siebert WMU Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Award.

Dr. John Martell, Jr. is the advisor for prestigious scholarships and fellowships.

We ask that you call to make an appointment so that you can be assured that we will be available for you. We are available for drop-in appointments most days, and can be reached by telephone or email. Remember, we need your help in making appointments so that we can serve the greatest number of students.

## **PRIORITY COURSE REGISTRATION**

All members in good standing of the Lee Honors College are eligible for special priority registration privileges. This means that you may register at the announced time for Lee Honors College students or any time thereafter by going to the GoWMU portal. The computer system will identify you as a member of the Lee Honors College. If you experience problems registering, call the honors college office at (269) 387-3230.

Please note that with the exception of a small number of cross-listed courses, honors courses are restricted to honors students and, in a very few cases, to majors. The call numbers printed in the Lee Honors College course book are for your use only. Please use them to register for these honors courses.

## AUDITS

There are two types of audits for honors students: one from the LHC, and one from the University when you apply for graduation.

### **Honors College Audits**

Lee Honors College audits are conducted on an annual basis during the summer, and address your progress in completing your honors requirements for graduation. Once completed, you will receive a letter from the honors college informing you about your current status and mailed to the permanent address on file with the University. Please contact the LHC academic advisors if you have questions regarding your audit. We also strongly recommend you meet with the Lee Honors College academic advisor at the beginning of your senior year to make sure you have fulfilled all LHC requirements.

### **Graduation Audits**

University audits are initiated when you are about to begin your senior year. This audit determines whether or not you have fulfilled all university requirements, general education, majors, minors, etc. You should apply for your graduation audit at your college of your major advising office. For additional information, please check your undergraduate catalog under Graduation Procedures.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### **Academic Standing Policy**

#### *Good Standing*

A student is in good standing with the honors college when the student's overall grade point average is at least 3.25.

#### *Warning*

Whenever the grade point average is less than 3.25, the student will be placed on academic warning status with the honors college, and strongly encouraged to meet with the Lee Honors College academic advisor.

#### *Academic Probation*

If a student's overall grade point average remains below 3.25 following one semester on academic warning status, the student will be placed on academic probation with the honors college.

#### *Dismissal*

After one semester on academic probation, students who fail to achieve a 3.25 overall grade point average will be dismissed from the Lee Honors College.

## HONORS STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

There are three organizations open to honors students: the Honors Student Association (HSA), the honorary society Alpha Lambda Delta (ALD), and the Phi Kappa Phi honorary for upper classmen.

Every honors student is automatically a member of the HSA, and we encourage you to be an active member.

Freshmen may join Alpha Lambda Delta if they achieve a 3.5 GPA in the first semester or year of full-time study. Normally, you will be sent a letter from our office, but do not hesitate to contact Sue Oole, who serves as the advisor for both ALD and HSA, if you have any questions.

Upperclassmen in the top 10 percent of their class are invited to join the Phi Kappa Phi honorary as juniors or shortly before they graduate. Please contact Dr. Nick Andreadis if you have any questions.

## LEE HONORS COLLEGE STAFF 2008

Dr. Keith M. Hearit, Dean

Dr. Nicholas A. Andreadis, Associate Dean & LHC Scholarship Advisor

Dr. John E. Martell, Jr., Assistant Dean Emeritus & Prestigious Scholarship Advisor

Ms. Sue Oole, Academic Advisor

Ms. Elyse Winning, Advising Graduate Assistant

Ms. Gayle McMillon, Office/ Building Coordinator

Mrs. Susan Daniels, Office Assistant

While we make every effort to inform you of events and necessary information about the LHC, it is also your responsibility to stay in touch with us. Our website has an active calendar for honors college related events. We encourage you to visit the honors college website frequently at [www.wmich.edu/honors](http://www.wmich.edu/honors) and become familiar with the information included within its pages. Additionally, we send out group emails to you on a regular basis and post information on various bulletin boards at the honors college. We are responsible for notifying you of pertinent information, but you must be responsible for receiving it. Please check our messages regularly, and contact us with any questions.

Feel free to contact us directly by email:

Dean, Dr. Keith Hearit: [keith.hearit@wmich.edu](mailto:keith.hearit@wmich.edu)

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*All official Lee Honors College electronic communication will be sent to your official WMU email address; please check it regularly. According to University policy, the honors college is allowed to respond to your messages only if they come from your WMU student account.*