

Handbook

2016-2017



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina Honors College

WELCOME

As a member of the South Carolina Honors College, you are in the process of joining—with the successful completion of your degree—nearly 10,000 South Carolina Honors alumni. You are invited to become part of this accomplished community of leaders in virtually every academic discipline; in medicine and health, law, the arts, business, engineering, non-profit agencies; and in just about any life endeavor you can imagine. The Honors staff and the faculty who teach our courses are dedicated to your success. Our goal is to challenge you and enable you to make the absolute most of your gifts and opportunities. We take great pride and pleasure in the work of the Honors College.

The goal of this handbook is to provide you with guidance toward enhancing your degree with the recognition that you are graduating with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College. Please read through this handbook to become familiar with what's included here and keep it handy. We imagine that you will likely want to consult it throughout your college career. A searchable form of the handbook is available on the Honors College Website.

If you have any questions about the College's policies or any other matter, or if you have a suggestion about how to improve the Honors College, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of my staff. And do come by our office in Harper College on the Horseshoe to say hello.

Cordially,
Steven Lynn
Dean, South Carolina Honors College

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2. Retention

2.1 Behavior: The College expects students to behave in appropriate academic and civil ways. Students who violate the Carolinian Creed may be dismissed from the College.

2.2 Grade Point Average: The College expects students to maintain academic standards as measured by their cumulative grade point ratio. We use a sliding grade point average [GPA] scale (see Table 1 below) to determine whether a student is meeting those required academic standards. This minimum GPA is cumulative and includes both Honors and non-Honors courses.

2.3 Progress Toward Graduating with Honors: We expect students to make satisfactory progress toward graduating with Honors. Graduating with Honors requires students to have taken a minimum of 45 Honors course credits. (See Table 1 below.) Please note that “H-Option” and “honored” course credits (see sections 3.4 and 3.5 below) count towards meeting the minimum Honors course credit requirements. A grade of “C” or better is required for a course to count both toward acceptable progress and also toward graduation with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College.

2.4 Progress Requirements: By the end of the indicated semester in Table 1, Honors students should have a cumulative GPA at the level listed and have earned at least the number of Honors credits listed.

2.5 Probation and Suspension: A student who either falls below the minimum GPA requirement or below the minimum Honors credit hour requirement (see table 1 below) will be allowed one probationary semester to raise his or her GPR and/or to earn more Honors course credits to meet these standards. During this time, a student will be allowed to take full advantage of all Honors College opportunities, such as Honors housing and Honors College courses. After the probationary semester, a student whose GPA and/or whose Honors course credits have been improved to meet the required standards will be returned to good standing in the College. However, if after this time, a student’s GPA or Honors course credits still do not meet these standards, he or she will be dismissed from the College. A student may petition the College for relief from these requirements; for the appeal procedure, see section 5.4.

The two terms “cumulative” and “overall” are used in distinctive ways by the University to describe a student’s Grade Point Average (GPA). The Honors College follows University usage and policy. “Cumulative” refers to “successive addition,” which means that the “cumulative GPA” reflects a student’s work at the University of South Carolina only. On the USC transcript cumulative and institutional GPA are synonymous. For a student who earns a 3.0 for 15 hours in the Fall at USC, and a 4.0 for 15 hours in the Spring at USC, the cumulative GPA would be 3.5. “Overall” means “including everything, comprehensive,” and thus reflects a student’s work at the University of South Carolina and elsewhere, if applicable. For a student who transfers to USC with a 4.0 for 30 hours, and then earns a 3.0 for an additional 30 hours at USC, the “overall” GPR (including everything) would be 3.5, and the “cumulative” GPA at USC would be 3.0.

The requirement that students must maintain at least a cumulative GPA of 3.3 to graduate with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College means that the GPA for coursework completed at USC must be 3.3 or higher. Transfer credits are not considered when determining a student’s status within the Honors College or eligibility for graduation “with honors.”

2.5 Grade Forgiveness: The University has a grade forgiveness policy, described on the Registrar’s website http://registrar.sc.edu/html/students/grade_forgiveness_faq.stm, which allows a student to

replace a grade of D+, D, F, or WF by retaking the same course for a better grade. It is rare and cause for deep concern when an Honors student earns one of these grades: Students who anticipate the possibility of such a grade, or who find themselves assigned such a grade, should see their advisor immediately. Honors students may take advantage of the University policy, but the Honors College's policies concerning probation and retention in the College are not affected. That is, a cumulative GPA that falls below the required minimum (see Table 1) will automatically trigger probationary status. A student on probation has one semester to "repair" his or her GPA. After one semester on probation, if the student's GPA is not above the required minimum, then the student will be dismissed from the Honors College. (An appeal to continue probationary status beyond one semester may be addressed to the dean of the Honors College.) Therefore, a student who seeks to repair his or her GPA by using the grade forgiveness policy should re-take the appropriate course immediately, in the next semester.

As a general rule, Honors courses must be used to forgive grades in Honors Courses (e.g. PHIL 110.502 spring 2009 to forgive a grade in PHIL 110.503 fall 2008). In rare cases, this will not be possible (e.g., BIOL 101.501 is not available in spring 2009 when grade forgiveness is needed). Prior approval from the dean of the Honors College must be obtained for a non-Honors course to provide a forgiven grade for an Honors course. "Prior" here means prior to enrolling in the "forgiving" course. Please note that schedule conflicts do not constitute a sufficient reason for substituting a non-Honors course for an Honors course.

3. South Carolina Honors College Academic Program

3.1 Graduating with Honors: Honors College students are expected to graduate with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College as part of their degree. To do so, a student must take courses across the spectrum of disciplines and must participate in a substantial, self-directed research paper/project. The University recognizes students who graduate with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College in the following ways:

- Special acknowledgment at the University's Commencement exercises,
- A notation on the diploma: graduated with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College,
- A certificate from the South Carolina Honors College, and
- A paragraph on the University transcript.

Graduation with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College indicates a fulfillment of rigorous requirements beyond the general degree. It testifies to a strong commitment to academic growth built on written and oral expression, intellectual analysis, and research skills.

These requirements are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Honors Progression and Distribution Requirements

Honors Progression Requirements

End of Semester	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
GPR	3.0*	3.0*	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3Δ
Honors Credits	0	9	9	18	18	27	27	36

* A student is expected to earn a minimum GPR of 3.0 in the first two semesters.

Δ A student must maintain a cumulative GPR of 3.3 in order to graduate with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College.

Minimum letter grade: "C" or better for any Honors course counted towards graduation with Honors

Distribution Requirements*	Credits Required	Course
English or Literature	3	Any course in English composition or in Literature
History of Civilization	3	Any course on the history of civilization
Humanities	3	Any humanities course
Social/Behavioral Science	3	Any social or behavioral science
Natural Science with lab	4	Must include a lab
Analysis	3	Math, Logic, Statistics, Computer Sciences, or other courses so designated.
Electives	19	Any Honors courses or up to 6 credits of study abroad courses (see below for a full explanation)
Beyond the Classroom	3	Undergraduate research, service learning, internship, or study outside of South Carolina (may be a non-Honors course)
Thesis prep (SCHC 390)	1	Senior thesis preparation course, usually 6 th semester (students abroad in this semester are exempt)
Thesis (SCHC 499)	3	Usually register for 1 credit of SCHC 499 in the 7 th semester and 2 credits of SCHC 499 in the 8 th semester
Total	45	

*Honors courses that meet each of the specific distribution requirements are designated in the SCHC course schedule

3.2 The South Carolina Honors College Curriculum: South Carolina Honors College courses are designated either by the “SCHC” prefix, or under the appropriate departmental prefix (e.g., “MATH,” “ENGL”). The SCHC prefix is used for courses designed specifically for the Honors College, and which have no direct equivalent in the regular University curriculum. Honors College versions of University courses are distinguished by alpha-numerical section designators beginning with an H (e.g., H01, H02). A section number of “H10” is used for an Honors College section within a larger, non- Honors course.

Students should bear in mind that the Honors College cannot be responsible for providing all the courses necessary to finish any particular discipline’s major. The College provides courses that fulfill University distribution requirements and that enrich a student’s academic experience. However, in several disciplines some advanced Honors College courses that contribute toward completion of that discipline’s major may not be available. Our advisors will work with you to make graduating “with Honors” possible.

With the approval of the appropriate dean or department chair, all Honors College courses may count toward group, area, major, minor, cognate, or elective requirements. Specific questions concerning equivalents should be directed to the SCHC office.

3.3 Advanced Placement Credits: The University of South Carolina accepts advanced standing credits earned in a variety of ways, including Advanced Placement [AP], International Baccalaureus [IB], College Level Examination Program [CLEP], Cambridge credits, and various departmental exams. The major department is responsible for transferring in the advanced placement and other college credits that appear on the transcript. AP credits do not count as Honors credits.

3.4 Honors Option: In unusual cases, a student may request Honors credit for a course that is not being offered by the Honors College. This is done by means of the “Honors Option,” or “H-Option.” An H-Option is based on a written contract between student and professor, and is subject to approval by the Honors College. The option is not available to freshmen, and usually cannot be exercised for courses regularly offered by the Honors College, for 100-level courses, or in summer school. A student will be limited to no more than three H-Option courses in his or her undergraduate career, and usually no more than one in a semester.

H-Option work must be distinguished in a substantive way from what usually would be expected in the normal—non-Honors—course. Simply a greater quantity of work (for example, a longer term paper or extra reading) does not constitute H-Option work.

The decision to exercise the H-Option in a course must be made prior to the last date to add a course according to the University calendar, and must be made in consultation with the student’s Honors College advisor. Further information, model H-Options, and appropriate forms are available in the College office.

3.5 Pass/Fail and Audit: Honors College courses cannot be taken Pass/Fail or for Audit unless the option is stated in the course description.

3.6 Academic Forgiveness: Any student who wants to apply for academic forgiveness for a South Carolina Honors College course must first petition the dean of the Honors College. For more information, please refer to article 2.5.

3.7 Beyond the Classroom: To encourage learning outside of the classroom, the Honors College requires students to have at least three credit hours worth of Honors educational experience outside of the traditional classroom setting.

Students typically will be able to satisfy this requirement in four ways: (1) undergraduate research for credit; (2) internship for credit; (3) service learning for credit; (4) study outside of South Carolina (typically study abroad, but also can include National Student Exchange and the Washington Internship Semester Program).

3.8 Study Abroad: To encourage study abroad, the Honors College will credit students with three Honors hours for summer programs and six Honors hours for each full-time semester study abroad program. In the initial semester abroad three credits will count to fulfill the Honors Beyond the Classroom requirement and the other three will count as an Honors elective. If there is an additional semester abroad or if Honors Beyond the Classroom is fulfilled in some other way, the six credits will count as honors electives. Credits earned while abroad may not usually be used to fulfill any other Honors distribution requirements. Honors credits earned abroad will be counted internally but will not be recorded on the student's transcript. Usually, students will not receive Honors credit for enrolling in a domestic exchange program unless they participate in that institution's Honors program.

3.9 Graduate Courses: Honors College students who enroll in courses at the 500 or 600 level may receive Honors credit by completing the work required of the graduate students in the course. Students seeking Honors course credit in this way must arrange for this in advance with the professor of the course and must submit an H- Option form to their Honors College advisor. Students who complete a 700 level course will automatically receive Honors credit for the course.

3.10 Senior Thesis: The Senior Thesis/Project is designed to be the culminating experience of a student's career in the South Carolina Honors College. All students are required to complete a Senior Thesis or Project in order to graduate with Honors from South Carolina Honors College. Students are free to choose their thesis/project topics, and may, if they desire, write a thesis or complete a project outside of their majors. The only exception to this rule applies to those students who are required by their major departments to write a thesis related to their major course of study; these students may choose to do a second senior thesis for the SCHC, but are not required to do so.

Two special Honors College courses enable students to complete the Senior Thesis/Project.

The first course, SCHC 390, provides time for a student and his or her thesis director to work together to explore the student's topic and to define the parameters of the research for the Senior Thesis. The final product of this course is a two to six page proposal that outlines the research methods and goals of the thesis or project. A student will enroll in SCHC 390 (an online, pass/fail course) during advising during the second semester of their junior year.

Students who study abroad during the second semester of their junior year may exempt this course with the permission of their Honors College advisor.

Please note that any senior thesis of 6 credits or more must include the Dean or an Associate Dean as a reader (potentially a 3rd reader) on the thesis.

In the second course, SCHC 499, a student conducts the research/scholarship and completes the writing and work for his or her thesis or project. The Honors College recommends that students register for SCHC 499 in the fall of their senior year. The thesis/project would then be due by the end of the second semester of their senior year. However, students may elect to take SCHC 499 and complete the thesis in one semester. In any case, SCHC 499 must be taken for a minimum of three credits, and may be taken for as many as 15 credits.

(Note: Students writing a thesis for the Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae degree must take a minimum of nine SCHC 499 credits; see section 3.12 below.)

Some students may be required by their major departments to take a thesis course with the course designation of their major field of study (e.g. HIST 499, PSYC 499 etc). Students completing their theses or projects in this manner need not register for SCHC 499 as well. The Honors College will accept theses and projects taken under other departmental course designations for Honors course credit and to fulfill the thesis requirement to graduate “with Honors.” Students should consult with their advisors to make sure that all Honors College senior thesis procedures are met. For more information about details and deadlines related to the thesis process, please see the Senior Thesis/ Project Handbook (available on the SCHC website).

3.11 Senior Check: To graduate with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College a student must do a Senior Check with an Honors College advisor prior to the end of his or her penultimate semester. This check ensures that the student is aware of all SCHC requirements. Initiating this check is the responsibility of the student.

3.12 Application for Graduation with Honors: Students must submit an application for graduation with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College to the Honors College in the first month of the semester they intend to graduate. The application is available on the SCHC web site (<http://schc.sc.edu>).

3.13 Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae ~ The SCHC Degree: The Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae (“Bachelor of Arts and Sciences,” or “BARSC”) is a unique and highly selective degree offered only by the South Carolina Honors College. To graduate with a BARSC degree a student must earn 69 Honors credits and 126 total credits, complete a Senior Thesis/ Project of at least nine credits, and achieve a cumulative 3.5 GPA by the end of his or her senior year. Additional distribution requirements apply as well (see Table 2 below). Students must have a minimum cumulative 3.6 GPA to apply for admission to the BARSC degree program. Usually the BARSC application/admission process is completed prior to advising during the student's fourth semester, but the College recommends that students interested in pursuing this degree make an appointment to talk about their interest with the Dean or Associate Dean during their first year.

The following steps should be taken by any student considering the BARSC degree:

- a. The student should discuss the degree program with his or her Honors Advisor, and then with the Dean or an Associate Dean of the Honors College. Ideally this should be done during the student's first three semesters in the Honors College.
- b. If the Dean approves the student to apply to the BARSC program, then the student must prepare a “Statement of Purpose” and submit it to the Dean and an Associate Dean for review. The Statement of Purpose should contain the following information:
 - i. The student's academic strengths and weaknesses;
 - ii. The student's personal and professional goals, both long- and short-term;

- iii. The reasons why the student's academic and professional goals cannot be met through a standard degree program (for example, a double major).
- c. The Statement of Purpose will be reviewed and revisions may be suggested by the Dean and/or Associate Dean.
- d. The student must establish his or her BARSC Committee, which consists of (i) the Dean and one Associate Dean; or (ii) two Associate Deans; and (iii) at least two faculty members invited by the student and approved by the Dean or Associate Dean. The two faculty members should represent two of the disciplines to be pursued through the student's BARSC Program. The student's BARSC Committee should receive the student's Statement of Purpose in preparation for meeting to establish the student's program of study.
- e. The student's BARSC Committee will then meet with the student once for an extended period of time (approximately two hours) to work out the specific program of study for that student. Once the program of study has been worked out, the student will transfer to the BARSC degree program officially, with the Honors College Dean or an Associate Dean serving as his or her Honors College and major advisor.

The following are the BARSC degree requirements:

- Completion of all distribution requirements for Graduation with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College (see Table 1).
- Completion of the Carolina Core and BARSC requirements as listed on Table 2
- A foreign language through at least one 300-level course;
- Mathematics through at least MATH 142, preferably as Honors College courses;
- One Independent Study, SCHC 399, to prepare for the Senior Thesis/Project;
- A Senior Thesis/Project of at least nine but no more than 15 credits.

Requirements for graduating with the Baccalaureus degree from the Honors College. In addition to these requirements the student must meet all requirements to graduate “with honors from South Carolina Honors College.”		
Minimum cumulative GPR to be admitted	3.6 at the end of student's 3rd semester	
Minimum cumulative GPR	3.5 at the end of the student's final semester	
Minimum letter grade	C or better for any course to count toward Baccalaureus degree	
Minimum hours	69 honors' credits for the Baccalaureus <u>Artium</u> et Scientiae, 126 credits total.	
Course Category	Number of courses/credits	Required Courses (may be non-Honors)
CMW	2/6	ENGL 101, ENGL 102
GHS	3/9	One European, One American, and One Non-western History. One of these courses must be approved for the Carolina Core
AIU	2/6	One Fine Arts and one Literature Course (beyond ENGL 101 and 102). One of these Courses must be approved for the Carolina Core.
GFL	0-6/0-19	Foreign Language through one 300-level course
GSS	3/9	Political Science, Economics, Sociology, Anthropology, Economics, Geography, etc. One of these courses must be approved for the Carolina Core
SCI	2/8-10	Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Marine Science, etc. Must include 2 hours of laboratories. Both courses and one lab must be approved for the Carolina Core.
ARP	2/8	MATH 141, MATH 142
Overlays	3/9-12	Two of three overlays may overlap with BARSC general education or degree specific requirements. At least one overlay must be met by a stand-alone course. All overlays must be approved for the Carolina Core Persuasive Communications Information Literacy (can be met with ENGL 102 at USC) Values, Ethics, and Social Responsibility
BARSC Specific Requirements	To be determined	Other courses are required as determined by the student's BARSC committee in consultation with the student.
Integrative Course: Senior Thesis	Credits	
SCHC 399	3	Independent Study
SCHC 390	1	Senior Thesis preparation course usually in 6th semester
SCHC 499	9-15	Usually register 7th semester and complete in 7 th and 8th semester

Table 2

Legend

CMW-Effective, Engaged, and Persuasive Communication

GHS-Global Citizenship and Multicultural Understanding

AIU-Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding

GFL-Global Citizenship and Multicultural Understanding-Language

GSS-Global Citizenship and Multicultural Understanding-Social Science
SCI-Science Literacy
ARP- Analytical Reasoning and Problem Solving

4. Advising

One of the most important benefits of being in the Honors College is the advising. The primary purpose of our advisors is to help Honors College students get the best education possible given each student's particular needs. After the first semester, the University will assign students an advisor in their major discipline. Honors College students, however, also retain an Honors College advisor who helps in selecting appropriate Honors courses and who will help to insure progress towards graduating "with Honors." While Honors College advisors are familiar with major requirements, students also will need to consult with their major discipline advisor as well in order to insure progress toward graduation in that discipline.

To prepare for Honors College advising, a student should be familiar with his or her remaining Honors requirements and should have an idea of which Honors College courses he or she wants to take. The College provides course descriptions on its website (<http://schc.sc.edu>). These descriptions contain considerable information (class size, grading procedures, number of field trips, etc.) for most of the courses offered each semester. Students are expected to consult this material prior to meeting with their Honors College advisor. In addition to regularly scheduled course advising, students are encouraged to consult periodically with their advisors during the semester.

Students planning to apply to medical school, dental school or veterinary school may be advised by an Honors College advisor who specializes in preparing students for those programs. Participating in clinical, research and service activities is critical for your competitiveness. Additionally, maintaining a comprehensive list of these activities will greatly facilitate your future application to medical, dental or veterinary school.

5. College Regulations

5.1 General Regulations: South Carolina Honors College students are responsible for taking care of the following matters without prompting from the SCHC office.

Students must keep the Honors College office informed of any change in their address, phone number, email address, or major. Without this information, the Honors College office cannot communicate important material to students.

It is also each student's responsibility to check their University e-mail address regularly for any announcements the Honors College may need to send.

Students must initiate a Senior Check in their penultimate semester. All seniors must also complete the Senior Exit Survey. Information about advising, registration, Senior Thesis/Project, and more is available on the SCHC website (<http://schc.sc.edu>).

The best way for students to stay informed about deadlines, requirements, and opportunities in the Honors College is to check the College's website.

5.2 Participation Fee: In order to enhance the Honors College experience, a participation fee is assessed to each Honors College student in the fall and spring semesters, whether or not a student is in residence at USC (i.e. students studying abroad must also pay the fee). This fee allows the Honors College to fund a wide variety of activities for classes and individuals, including special courses, undergraduate research fellowships, field trips, etc. The fee is required for students enrolled in a four-year degree program; students participating in a degree program that requires enrollment for more than four years (such as Pharmacy) are only required to pay the fee for the first four years.

5.3 Withdrawing from the College: If a student chooses to withdraw from the Honors College, he or she should fill out a request for withdrawal form from the Student Services office and arrange a meeting with the Dean. A student will not be readmitted to the College, after resigning from the College except by approval of the Committee on Scholastic Standards and Petitions.

5.4 Appeals: A student who wishes to appeal any decision made by a staff member of the College may do so, first by taking their concern to either the Dean or an Associate Dean. If the student does not receive satisfaction at that level, an appeal may be made directly to the appropriate committee. The College is small enough that individual cases can be heard and carefully weighed on their merits. Students are encouraged to voice their concerns and request special consideration under exceptional circumstances. Students are also urged to play an active role in the curriculum planning and administration of the College.

6. College Organization

6.1 Dean: The Dean of the South Carolina Honors College is the chief administrator of the College and is responsible for all operations of the Honors College.

6.2 Associate Deans: The Associate Deans pay particular attention to program development and other Honors College initiatives, such as supporting undergraduate research. The Dean and Associate Deans all assist with the development of the Honors course schedule and with academic advising.

6.3 Advisors: In addition to advising, the College's Academic Advisors also produce Honors College publications and electronic communications, coordinate alumni, academic and student affairs, and oversee the Senior Thesis process, and other activities.

6.4 Director of Information Technology: The Director of Information/Education Technology maintains and develops the College's information systems.

6.5 Directors of Alumni Relations, Development, Internships, Recruitment, Service Learning, Student Services, Study Abroad, and Undergraduate Research: These staff duties are indicated by their titles and include academic advising. For example, the Director of Internship Programs works with students to find and place them in relevant internships to enhance their educational experience.

6.6 Office Support: Many questions and concerns can be handled by the South Carolina Honors College office staff. Questions concerning requirements, advising, scheduling and housing can usually be handled by the Coordinator for Student Services. Questions or concerns about financial matters, including reimbursements and other costs associated with College activities, can usually be handled by the Business Manager.

7. Carolina Creed

The community of scholars at the University of South Carolina is dedicated to personal and academic excellence.

Choosing to join the community obligates each member to a code of civilized behavior.

As a Carolinian...

I will practice personal and academic integrity;

I will respect the dignity of all persons;

I will respect the rights and property of others;

I will discourage bigotry, while striving to learn from differences in people, ideas and opinions;

I will demonstrate concern for others, their feelings, and their need for conditions which support their work and development. Allegiance to these ideals requires each Carolinian to refrain from and discourage behaviors which threaten the freedom and respect every individual deserves.

(Revised May 12, 2016)