



*University of Massachusetts Lowell*  
*Honors Program*  
*“A proud member of the Commonwealth Honors Program”*

**Honors Program Guidebook**

***Honors Program Contact Information:***

Honors Program Office:	Southwick Hall, Room 320 North Campus – (978) 934-2797
Honors Web Page:	<a href="http://www.uml.edu/honors">http://www.uml.edu/honors</a>
Honors Program Email:	<a href="mailto:honors@uml.edu">honors@uml.edu</a>

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For  
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## **Honors Program Mission Statement**

The mission of the UML Honors Program is to provide enriched academic opportunities to meet the educational needs of exceptionally talented students and to foster the pursuit of scholarly excellence in undergraduate higher education.

The Honors Program seeks to promote the development and professional growth of motivated students by engaging them in activities designed to enhance their critical, cognitive, and creative potential and by fostering interactions with committed faculty.

## Honors Program Requirements and Academic Policies

### Admissions Standards

A first-year student may apply to the Honors Program any time prior to matriculation if he or she

- has a combined score of at least 1200 on the SAT (or at least 26 on the ACT) and also meets one of the following requirements:
- ranks in the top 10 percent of his or her senior class upon graduation, OR
- has a recalculated grade point average of 3.25 or better.

A UMass Lowell student or entering transfer student may apply to the Honors Program if he or she has achieved an overall GPA of 3.25 or higher on a 4.0 scale with at least 12 earned credits. Transfer students must submit a copy of their transcript.

### Academic Requirements

To earn a Commonwealth Honors Program designation upon graduation, all students are required to complete a minimum of 18 credits of Honors coursework during their University career. **A grade of 'B' or better** is required in all honors coursework counting toward an Honors Diploma. No more than half of all honors course work can be completed as honors-by-contract.

All students are required to complete the following courses:

- Honors Workshop (59.258) (3 credits)
- Honors Senior Project or Thesis (3 - 6 credits)

### Academic Standing

In order to remain in good academic standing with the Honors Program, students must maintain an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.25 or higher. Students whose GPA falls between 3.0 and 3.25 should consult an Honors Program advisor to develop an educational plan to raise their GPA to 3.25 or higher. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 will be dismissed from the program but are welcome to apply for readmission if their GPA reaches 3.25.

## How Does A Student Earn Honors Credit?

Below are descriptions of the five ways a student can earn honors credit.

Please note:

- Honors courses are distinguished from regular courses by a “300” section number.
- A student must earn a grade of B or higher in order to obtain honors credit. (Any grade of D or above still earns regular credit, however.)
- A student who wishes to change from an honors section to a non-honors section of the same course or who wishes to withdraw from an honors-by-contract agreement **must do so by the fifth Wednesday of the semester.**

### Honors Course

An honors course is a course specifically designed for honors students, such as Honors Physics I (95.161). All sections of an honors course are “300” sections, and all students enrolled in the course should be striving to achieve honors credit. The class size is usually smaller than that of a traditional course: typically there are no more than 20 students in an honors course.

### Dedicated Honors Section of a Regular Course

A dedicated honors section of a regular course is a “300” section of a non-honors course, such as Economics I (49.201 section 301). A dedicated honors section is similar to an honors course in that all students in that section are striving to earn honors credit. However, there are also non-honors sections of the course. The differences between an honors section and a regular section of the same course are that the size of the honors section is smaller and the course content is “enriched” in some way.

### Concurrent Honors Section of a Regular Course

In a concurrent honors section of a course, a “300” section is created to run in the same room at the same time as a regular section. Students striving to earn honors credit register for the “300” section, where they will be required to complete additional assignments or projects above and beyond what is required for the regular section. In concurrent sections the class size may be larger than in a dedicated honors section, but the honors students will nevertheless have opportunities to meet with the professor to discuss the material related to the honors component of the course. Faculty should create a separate syllabus for those students in the honors (“300”) part of the section indicating what alternate assignments they must complete and how those assignments will be counted toward their course grade. (Sample syllabi are available from the Honors Program Office.)

Continued on next page

## **Honors-by-Contract**

Honors-by-contract is a way for students to obtain honors credit for a course that does not have a dedicated honors section or a concurrent honors section. The professor and student agree on a required project or set of assignments that must be completed in order to obtain honors credit. Students are responsible for filing the honors by contract form with the Honors Office before the end of the Add/Drop period. (This form is included in Appendix A of this guide.) The Registrar's Office is then notified of the contract agreement for the course and a "300" section is created for that individual student. Faculty should create a separate syllabus for the honors-by-contract student indicating what alternate assignments must be completed and how those assignments will be counted toward the course grade. (Sample syllabi are available from the Honors Program Office.) The student and professor meet periodically throughout the semester to evaluate the student's progress. Honors-by-contract differs from a concurrent section in that there is usually only one student in a section of a course who is executing honors-by-contract. **Only Honors Program students may enroll in an "Honors-by-Contract" course.**

## **Graduate Courses**

A student may earn honors credit by completing a graduate course as an undergraduate. Any student who earns a B or better in any graduate course while still an undergraduate may use that course for honors credit.

## **Special Features of the Honors Program**

### **Residence Life**

There is designated housing available for Honors Program members. Special extracurricular programs and workshops are provided. Honors housing is available on a first come first served basis. All Residence Life paperwork and deposit requirements must be completed for a student to be eligible for Honors Program housing.

### **Scholarship Opportunities**

The Honors Fellows Endowment Fund provides merit based financial assistance for qualified students in the Honors Program. Applications are available in the Honors Office. The deadline is early February, and July for the Incoming Student Scholarship.

### **Senior Research Grants**

The Honors Program offers grants of up to \$500 for materials and/or activities related to a student's senior project or thesis. Applications are available in the Honors Office. The deadline is usually early November.

## **Honors Program Activities and Events**

The Honors Program sponsors activities and cultural events for the benefit of its students. The following is a list of some examples of these activities and events:

- A Leadership Seminar Series consisting of
  - Ropes Course—to enhance and build leadership qualities
  - Presentations on various subjects: How to Apply for Graduate School, Leadership Qualities for Today's World, Thesis Preparation, Stress Relief!
  - Participation in the campus and regional College Bowl tournaments
  - Participation in the annual Massachusetts Undergraduate Research Conference
- Trips to visit the Boston Museum of Fine Arts
- A tour of the mansions of Newport, Rhode Island
- A trip to Washington, DC, including a visit to the Holocaust Museum

In addition to these events, the WiseGuys Club, a student government organization affiliated with the Honors Program, also promotes a series of community service projects such as:

- A Canal Cleanup in the City of Lowell
- Tutoring at Girls, Inc. of Lowell
- Volunteering at the Halloween Party for Girls, Inc. of Lowell
- The City of Lowell's Walk for Hunger and Homelessness
- Volunteering for a story hour at Lowell's Pollard Memorial Library
- Decorating and distributing candy canes at the Friends of the Jimmy Fund Holiday Party
- Building a Home in Mississippi with Habitat for Humanity

## **Appendix A. Honors Program Forms and Application**

Honors Program Application Form

Honors-by-Contract Form

Honors Program Section Change Form

Honors Program Intent to Graduate for the Honors Program Form



University of Massachusetts Lowell  
Honors Program  
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Application Form

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ **Male / Female** (please circle one)

Permanent Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Campus Box # \_\_\_\_\_ Campus Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Status: Entering Freshman \_\_\_\_\_ Current UML Student \_\_\_\_\_ Transfer Student \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID Number or SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Year: Fr \_\_\_\_\_ So \_\_\_\_\_ Jr \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_

**Honors Program Admissions Requirements**

**A first-year student may apply to the Honors Program any time prior to matriculation if he or she**

- Has a combined score of at least 1200 on the SAT (or at least 26 on the ACT) and fulfills one of the following:
- Ranks in the top 10 percent of his or here senior class upon graduation, OR
- Has a recalculated grade point average of 3.25 or better.

**A UMass Lowell student or entering transfer student may apply to the Honors Program if he or she has achieved an overall GPA of 3.25 or higher on a 4.0 scale with at least 12 earned credits.**

**Application Procedure**

In addition to this application, **students must submit a one-page, typed essay** outlining why you wish to participate in the Honors Program, what your academic talents and goals are, and any other information which would be helpful in getting to know you. **Transfer students must also submit an official copy of their transcript.**

**Honors Housing**

The University has designated Honors Floors within the residence halls that are consistent with both the academic and social needs of Honors students. Honors housing is available on a first come first serve basis. Positioning for **placement is determined by the date that the Office of Residence Life receives the completed housing contract.** However, placement is not guaranteed, and is contingent upon the timely completion of all UML Residence Life documents and payments.

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this application to the Honors Program, Southwick Hall Room 320, University of Massachusetts Lowell, Lowell, MA 01854 or fax to (978) 934-3088.



One University Avenue  
Southwick 320  
Lowell, Massachusetts 01854  
tel. 978.934.2797  
fax: 978.934.3088  
www.uml.edu/honors  
honors@uml.edu

## HONORS PROGRAM

An honors contract is a way for an honors program student to obtain honors credit for a course that is not offered at the honors level. The professor and student agree on a required project or set of assignments that must be completed in order to obtain honors credit, essentially creating their own honors course. Honors courses should not be characterized exclusively by increased work requirements but should include activities and expectations designed to enhance and enrich the learning experience of the students. Examples of such activities include

- Incorporation of a cross-disciplinary approach to course content
- Addressing issues or recent developments at the international, national, or local level, or within a specific discipline
- Assignment of a variety of projects and writing exercises designed to hone the students' skills in writing and critical thinking
- Trips off-campus to museums, historic sites, libraries, corporations, laboratories, or other similar facilities, as appropriate
- Inclusion of laboratory or field research, archival or library research, or activities in the creative arts, as appropriate
- Service learning

Students are responsible for filing the honors by contract form with the Honors Office before the end of the Add/Drop period. The Registrar's Office is then notified of the contract agreement for the course and a separate section is created for that individual student with a section number in the 300's, usually 301. (A section number in the 300's indicates an honors course.)

*A student may drop an honors contract on or before the fifth Wednesday of the semester. After that date, the only way to drop a contract is to drop the course because section changes are not permitted after that date.*

Since the instructor and student have created a new course, there must be a new course syllabus. The honors contract form and the regular course syllabus together function as the syllabus for the honors course. The student must be graded according to the criteria spelled out on the contract form.

*Please contact the Honors Program Office if you have any questions.*



University of  
Massachusetts  
Lowell

One University Avenue  
Southwick 320  
Lowell, Massachusetts 01854  
tel. 978.934.2797  
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www.uml.edu/honors  
honors@uml.edu

HONORS PROGRAM

*Contract for Honors Credit*

Name of applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Class (circle one): FR SO JR SR

Course Name and Number : \_\_\_\_\_

Semester (circle one): Fall Spring Year: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please attach a sheet detailing

1. The objective(s) of the contract
2. The tasks that the student will perform to earn honors credit
3. The percentage of the overall course grade that will be determined by the Honors Contract work
4. A tentative schedule of instructor/student conferences

Please also include a copy of the course syllabus.

Note the following:

1. Students must be enrolled in the Honors Program to register for Honors by Contract
2. No contracts will be approved for Summer or Winter (intersession) courses
3. No more than 1/2 of the student's total Honors credits may be fulfilled by contract
4. Blank contracts will not be approved

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

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

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

***This form and all attachments must be submitted to the Honors Program office (Southwick 320) by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of classes.***



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**Section Change Form**

Students who wish to **change from an honors section to a non-honors section** of the same course or who wishes to drop an honors by contract agreement must file this form with the Honors Program office by the **fifth Wednesday** of the semester.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Number and Section Number of Dropped Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Number and Section Number of Added Course: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

***Please complete this form and return it to the Honors Program Office - Southwick 320, or fax to (978)***

***934-3088 by the end of the fifth Wednesday of the semester.***



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**Honors Program Declaration of Intent to Graduate**

Students who plan to graduate with an Honors Diploma and Commonwealth Honors Program Scholar designation must complete this form and return it to the Honors Program office **no later than the add/drop period** during the student's final semester.

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

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Minor/Second Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Post-Graduation Plans (please list name of job or graduate school if any): \_\_\_\_\_

How can we keep in touch with you (email, phone number)? \_\_\_\_\_

Check all that apply:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed Honors Workshop (59.258)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed Thesis Proposal form and submitted to Honors Program Director
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed Thesis, including presentation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed and Submitted Thesis Completion Form to Honors Program Director
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed required Honors Program Credits (if not completed, please list which Honors Courses will be attempted this semester) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Filed DIG form with Major Department

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Honors Director/Coordinator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix B. Honors Project Handbook**



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## **Honors Project Handbook**

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## Introduction

Every honors student is required to complete an honors thesis or project worth at least 3 credits. The nature of your project will depend on your major and interests. For example, a chemistry major might perform a series of lab experiments in order to understand the nature of some reaction, while an art major might produce a portfolio of original works of art. The purpose of this handbook is to outline the Honors Program project requirements and to offer some tips on getting started and carrying out the project.

Your honors project has the potential to be the most exciting and rewarding academic activity you undertake as a college student. It offers you the chance to create something for yourself instead of simply responding to the work of others. Working closely with a faculty member can itself be a rich learning experience. A good honors project can also be a stepping stone to the next stage of your career, perhaps by catching the attention of a potential employer or of a graduate school admissions officer. You will acquire valuable skills by planning and carrying out a project of this nature.

## Requirements

- At least 3 of your honors course credits must consist of an honors thesis or project.
- You must have a faculty advisor plus 1-2 other committee members for your project.
- You must file a project proposal and Project Proposal Form with the Honors Program Office (Southwick 320) as early as possible, but no later than the end of the second week of the semester in which you start your project. Proposal guidelines and a Project Proposal Form are included in this handbook. Additional copies of the Project Proposal Form are available at <http://www.uml.edu/honors>.
- You must turn in a copy of your final product (usually a thesis) and file an abstract and Project Completion Form when you have completed your project. A Project Completion Form is included in this handbook; additional copies are available at the Honors Program Office.
- **You must give a public presentation of your project.** You can do this by giving a presentation at the UML Student Research Symposium and/or at the Massachusetts Undergraduate Research Conference, or you and your advisor can arrange a presentation in your department.

## **Getting Started**

### **Finding a topic**

The most important criterion for choosing a project is that it should greatly interest you. If you have taken a course you really liked or if you have read or heard about a subject you would like to pursue further, consider doing a project in that area. If you are having difficulty choosing a topic, talk to your academic advisor.

It is very important to get an early start on choosing your topic and your faculty advisor. A hastily arranged project will probably not work out the way you would like. If you plan to do your project in your senior year, you should start thinking about it in your junior year. By the end of the second semester of your junior year you should have chosen a topic and found an advisor, and if possible you should have written your proposal. It is difficult to finish a project in just one semester. Therefore, if you intend to do a 3-credit project in your senior year rather than a 6-credit project, you should plan to do it in the fall semester to avoid problems with graduation in the event of a delay in the completion of your project.

### **Putting together a committee**

Your honors project/thesis committee will consist of one advisor and 1-2 other faculty members. Your committee should be knowledgeable about your topic and a group with whom you have a comfortable working relationship. You probably already know several faculty members in your department. One of them may be willing to serve as your advisor or to suggest someone who would be willing to serve. If you are having difficulty finding an advisor, talk to your academic advisor or the Honors Director.

In addition to your advisor, need to have one or two other faculty members on your project committee to provide additional guidance and information.

## **The Project Proposal**

Your project proposal serves several purposes. Writing the proposal will help you organize your thoughts and decide exactly what you would like to accomplish. While you are working on your project, your proposal will serve as a “road map” that will help keep you focused on your goals. Your proposal also serves as a kind of contract between you and your committee and between you and the Honors Program. Having all parties agree in advance on the nature of your project will minimize the chance of misunderstandings later.

You may find as you work on your project that you will not be able to do exactly what you said you would do in your proposal. This is a common occurrence and should not worry you. If major discrepancies arise between your proposal and your actual project, however, you should submit an amended proposal to the Honors Program Office. Your advisor and the Honors Program Office can help you determine whether this is necessary.

## **Thesis Style Requirements**

The final product for most honors projects is a thesis. In order to ensure some degree of uniformity among the honors theses, please follow the guidelines below when writing your thesis. These guidelines were adapted from the dissertation requirements of the Graduate School.

## **Technical specifications**

Your thesis should be done on 8 1/2 x 11 inch white paper. It should be typed or printed on a letter-quality printer on only one side of the paper. The text should be double-spaced. The left margin should be 1.5 inches, and the other margins should be 1 inch.

### **Format**

Your thesis should consist of the following components in the order shown:

- Title Page (including the thesis title, your name and signature, and your committee members' names and signatures)
- Abstract
- Acknowledgments
- Table of Contents, with page references
- List of Tables, if any, with titles and page references
- List of Illustrations, if any, with titles and page references
- Text
- Literature Cited
- Appendices, if any

**Title Page Format**

The Use of Onomatopoeia in Melville's Moby Dick

by

John Q. Doe

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Honors Program  
University of Massachusetts Lowell  
(Year)

Faculty Advisor: Professor Jane J. Smith, Department of English

Author's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures of other Committee Members (at least one):

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The **abstract** should give a succinct account of your thesis work, briefly summarizing your conclusions. It should not exceed 150 words. The **table of contents** should contain the list of tables (if any), the list of illustrations (if any), the major divisions (e.g. chapters) and first level of subdivisions, the literature citation page, and the appendices (if any). A page number for each item in the table of contents should be shown in a column at the right margin. The **list of tables** should be a complete list of all tables and the pages on which they appear. The **list of illustrations** should be a complete list of all illustrations (including photographs, maps, and charts) and the pages on which they appear.

### **Words of Wisdom**

Your honors project can be one of your most exciting and rewarding college experiences. To help ensure that this is the case, please keep the following suggestions in mind.

- Decide at the start of your project how many hours per week you will work on the project, and stick to that commitment. Working at a steady pace will produce much better results than trying to do the whole project in two weeks.
- Schedule frequent (preferably weekly) meetings with your advisor to discuss your progress. Remember that your advisor has the primary responsibility for approving your project. S/he may decide not to approve your project if you have not had regular contact.
- When you are setting up the timetable for your project, remember that it always takes longer than you expect to complete a task. A good rule of thumb is to estimate the maximum amount of time required to complete a task in the worst possible case, and then double your estimate.
- Reread your proposal from time to time to keep your focus.
- The reference librarians at O'Leary and Lydon libraries can be very helpful.
- **Remember to have fun.**

## Guidelines for Honors Project Proposal

Your proposal should include the following components:

1. **Basic project description**

What is the goal of your project? What do you hope to accomplish? Be specific.

2. **Materials and methods**

Explain how you plan to carry out your project. For example, if you plan to conduct experiments, explain what those experiments will entail; if you plan to do a critical study of a work of literature, explain what your approach will be; etc. If your project involves the use of reference material, include a preliminary bibliography. If your project involves any special materials (lab equipment, for example), explain what materials you will need and how you will procure them.

3. **Product**

What will the final product of your project be? In most cases it will be a thesis, but depending on your major it might be a collection of original poetry, a prototype of some machine, a computer program, etc.

4. **Timeline**

You should include a tentative schedule for completing each part of your project, including the final product. Your schedule should indicate how frequently you would meet your advisor to discuss your progress. You will probably not be able to follow this tentative schedule exactly, but it will provide some structure for your work.



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Honors Project Proposal Form

This form and your proposal must be turned in to the Honors Office **no later than the end of the second week of the semester** in which you start your project.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

SID Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expected semester & year of graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Local address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Major(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of project advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of additional committee members (at least one) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Duration of project (1 or 2 semesters) \_\_\_\_\_

Course name(s) and number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE ATTACH A 1-2 PAGE PROPOSAL DESCRIBING THE WORK YOU PLAN TO ACCOMPLISH.**

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

-----  
I have approved the attached proposal and I agree to supervise this student's honors project.

Advisor's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member(s) signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Honor's Director's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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**Honors Project Completion Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

SID Number \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Course name(s) and number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Public Presentation of Project \_\_\_\_\_

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

I certify that this student has satisfactorily completed his/her honors project and has given a public presentation on the date listed above.

Advisor's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member(s) signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and return this form, along with a copy of your thesis, to the Honors Program Office (Southwick 320) **by the end of the final exam period**. Students whose final product is not a thesis should submit a description of their project with this form.