

# TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

**Title:** Honors Programs  
**Policy Number:** 02.10.01  
**Issuing Authority:** Board of Trustees  
**Responsible Officer:** Provost

**Date Created:** January 3, 2006  
**Date Last Amended/Reviewed:** January 3, 2006  
**Date Scheduled for Review:** January 3, 2011  
**Reviewing Office:** Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies

### **Scope of Policy & Rationale:**

This policy statement outlines planned changes to the existing honors structure at Temple University. It replaces the existing structure of a two-year “university” honors program and various upper-division “departmental” honors programs with an integrated four-year honors program comprising distinct lower- and upper-division university honors components. In addition, upper-division university honors will encompass a range of “departmental” honors programs.

This policy statement outlines the current structure of honors and its major problems. It describes a different approach to university honors admissions and retention, to program structure and content, to staffing and to governance.

The impetus for the policy comes from the fact that Temple’s current honors program is essentially limited to two years. Further, the current structure disadvantages most university honors students by virtue of their choice of major. Aside from those students majoring in business, psychology and a small number of other disciplines, students have no formal upper- division honors experience at Temple.

The planned program will offer all honors-eligible students, irrespective of major, an opportunity to benefit from a more holistic and complete honors experience.

The planned program will require flexibility, innovation and cooperation by departments, colleges and the university. It addresses four specific aspects of change in the current honors program:

1. Admissions and retention criteria
2. Structure and content of the program
3. Teaching
4. Governance

When implemented, the planned honors program will ensure that all honors-eligible students, irrespective of major, have the opportunity to experience a challenging four-year honors program.

### ***Temple Honors: The Need for Change***

The existing honors program is in need of improvement and development in a number of key areas.

Among the more significant concerns are:

- Temple honors needs a new admissions policy and a more proactive recruitment strategy for prospective students.
- Temple must create an integrated four-year honors program. This new program should build upon the strengths of the existing lower-division "university" honors and upper division "departmental" honors programs.
- The upper division program must have an undergraduate research experience at its core. It must also have a flexible structure that allows all honors eligible students, irrespective of major, to experience a challenging upper-division honors program.
- In general, only honors designated faculty – those who want to teach and have the credentials to teach in the honors program - should teach honors courses. This restructuring will include a request for nomination and review process that will identify a distinct honors faculty. Similarly, only honors students should be in honors courses.<sup>1</sup>
- The honors curriculum needs to encourage interdisciplinary work and enable students to take advantage of overseas experiences.
- Admission to the upper division program should be separate from admission to the lower division program. Admission to the upper division program is based upon the quality of a student's academic record at Temple or, for transfer students, at other comparable institutions.

### **Policy Statement**

#### ***The New Honors Program: Overview***

Temple's four-year honors program will comprise a lower division program and a separate, though integrated, upper division program.

Admission to the lower division program will be based upon the normal admissions criteria, including SAT scores and HSGPA. Admission to the upper division program will be based upon cumulative GPA during the first two years at Temple (or, for transfer students, at other institutions).

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<sup>1</sup> There will be some exceptions to both these policies to enable other honors goals to be met.

The requirements of the lower-division honors program will not change. The focus is primarily on honors sections of general education courses, honors sections of selected major courses and additional courses unique to the honors program. The program will maintain the current eight-course requirement in order to achieve the honors certificate.<sup>2</sup>

The upper-division honors curriculum will focus primarily on undergraduate research and creative activity.<sup>3</sup> The upper division program will require successful completion of six honors courses (two of which are required) in order to receive an honors notation on the Temple transcript.

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<sup>2</sup> At least two of the required eight honors courses must come from outside the general education curriculum (though Honors students may take all their general education requirements in Honors versions of those courses). The courses outside General Education may include lower and upper-division honors courses.

<sup>3</sup> 'Research and creative activity' incorporates all independent research and creative work by undergraduate students. This broader specification is to encourage and explicitly include within the rubric of 'research' creative activity undertaken in the arts, dance, music or other performance majors.

## Lower Division Honors

### Admissions and retention:

The admissions protocol for honors will represent a change from past practices.<sup>4</sup> Temple will offer honors to all applicants with an admissions score of 90+. In addition, the admissions office will continuously identify for the Director of Honors, all applicants with admissions scores below 90 but with combinations of either 1300+ SATs and 3.25+ HSGPA or 3.8+ HSGPA and 1200+ SATs. The Director of Honors will review all identified files and offer honors admission as appropriate.<sup>5</sup>

The current honors graduation criteria (minimum 3.25 GPA in Honors courses and 3.25 cumulative overall GPA) will remain. In addition, the current honors retention criteria will remain (students maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or be placed on probation).

### Structure and content of the program

The Director of Honors will develop the honors curriculum. All courses designated as providing lower division honors credit to be reviewed and authorized by the Director of Honors.<sup>6</sup>

Each one-year curriculum cycle will include at least one honors section of each general education area. In addition, the honors curriculum will include:

- Lower and/or upper division honors sections of selected major requirements or electives.
- Lower and/or upper division courses unique to honors.
- Lower and/or upper division non-honors courses that provide significant experiential and/or service learning value.<sup>7</sup>
- Lower and/or upper division honors tutorials (variable credit) that add to experiences in regular upper division courses.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Existing admissions scoring practices did not offer honors to students who scored high on SATs but not as high on their HSGPA. The change will widen the net to include all potential honors eligible students.

<sup>5</sup> Because of freshmen transfers and other possibilities, the Director of Honors will have discretionary authority to admit eligible students to the lower division program during their freshmen year.

<sup>6</sup> Schools with existing lower-division honors programs, like the Fox School, will work with the Director of Honors to identify the courses that are already approved as honors courses and to define the structure of the local program, whose eight-course requirement will be designated as lower-division honors with local distinction.

<sup>7</sup> The Inside-Out program, for example, is cross-listed in Criminal Justice and Women's Studies and involves students taking a course in Graterford Prison. Such courses would require a separate honors syllabus to qualify for honors credit. Non-honors courses eligible to provide honors credit would be evaluated and monitored by the Director of Honors and the Faculty Honors Oversight Committee.

<sup>8</sup> For example, an honors student in Russian might take a regular course in European History and add to that a tutorial within the Russian department involving readings in Russian history and/or literature that complements the traditional historical perspective.

## Teaching

All honors courses will be taught by designated honors faculty, and will enroll only honors students. Honors credit can be obtained from a non-honors course only with the prior review and approval of the Director of Honors.

Honors faculty will be eligible to receive from the Director of Honors financial support up to a maximum of \$1,250 per course for direct costs incurred in teaching an honors course.<sup>9</sup>

## Governance

The Director of Honors will administer all aspects of the lower division honors program and will report to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies. The Faculty Honors Oversight Committee<sup>10</sup> will review the operation of the honors program and advise the Director as needed.

## **Upper Division Honors**

### Admissions and retention:

Students may only enter the upper-division honors program (departmental, school/college or university upper-division) during the first semester of their junior year or thereafter.<sup>11</sup> Entering students must have successfully completed at least two years of undergraduate study with a minimum cumulative 3.6 GPA overall to be eligible for upper-division honors.

Students completing lower division honors at Temple (or at some other institution for transfer students) do not receive automatic entry to upper level honors. Similarly, students at Temple (or transfers to Temple) who were not involved in the lower-division honors program will be eligible to enter the upper-division honors program if they satisfy the admissions criteria.

Students must maintain a minimum cumulative 3.4 GPA in the major and 3.4 GPA overall to remain in upper-division honors. If the cumulative GPA in the major falls

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<sup>9</sup> Funds are available from Honors to cover direct support of honors courses. These funds can be obtained in advance or on a reimbursement basis and will require approval of the Directors of Honors. The fund is intended to support the preparation and delivery of the honors course experience. Accordingly, it is to be used for teaching-related purposes, including student and instructor travel, costs of class events/experiences, purchase of books, equipment, research assistance and other normal costs associated with course preparation and delivery. Resources may also be used for conference travel directly related to course preparation, maintenance and improvement.

<sup>10</sup> Only honors faculty may serve on the honors oversight committee.

<sup>11</sup> Typically, they will have completed successfully between 60 and 75 credits at Temple or another institution. For students in programs exceeding 4 years the credit hour range for admission is adjusted appropriately.

below 3.4 and/or the GPA overall falls below 3.4, the student is placed on honors probation for one semester. If the student fails to bring his or her cumulative GPA in the major back to 3.4+ and his or her GPA overall to 3.4+ at the end of his or her probationary semester, the student is demitted permanently from honors.

The student must complete his or her undergraduate education with a minimum 3.4 GPA in the major and minimum 3.4 GPA overall to graduate with upper-division honors.

### Structure and content of the program

The upper-division honors program will involve a blend of existing college/school and departmental honors programs with other upper-division honors experiences. The upper division program will continue to encourage and support the development of new departmental honors programs wherever feasible. However, it is important that the upper division program maintain consistency in terms of goals, policies and procedures across the university, school/college or department based programs.<sup>12</sup> For this reason, university policy with regard to honors will supersede any conflicting policy existing or proposed at the local (school/college or department) level.

All courses designated as providing upper-division honors credit will be reviewed and authorized by the Director of Honors and the faculty Honors Oversight Committee.

The upper division program will have two course requirements:

- An advanced upper-division research theory/practice course (preferably taken early in the junior year).<sup>13</sup>
- An upper division thesis, equivalent research project or creative work, involving an advisor, an examining committee and a public presentation of the work (preferably started in junior year and completed early in senior year).<sup>14</sup>
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In addition, upper division honors requires a minimum of four additional upper division courses. The upper-division honors curriculum will recognize and give upper division honors credit for:

- Upper division honors of selected major requirements or electives.<sup>15</sup>
- Upper division courses unique to honors.
- Upper-division, non-honors courses that provide significant experiential and/or service learning value.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Currently, there are several upper division departmental or school/college honors programs that display similar overall structures and policies but differ in the details of admission and retention criteria and course requirements.

<sup>13</sup> In the case of honors students who will engage in “creative activity” an equivalent advanced preparatory course will be required. In the Fox School, the existing research theory course will satisfy this requirement.

<sup>14</sup> For students pursuing the professional track in Fox School of Business Management’s upper division honors, the research project may be the currently required business plan.

<sup>15</sup> These courses can include any upper level courses taken in the freshman or sophomore years as long as the courses have not already been counted toward completion of the lower-division honors program.

<sup>16</sup> See footnote 7 supra.

- Graduate courses for upper-division undergraduate honors credit.
- Upper-division honors independent study.<sup>17</sup>
- Upper-division honors tutorials (variable credit) that add to experiences in regular upper division courses.<sup>18</sup>

Departmental and school/college upper-division honors programs will adopt the minimum six (6) course, upper-division honors requirement but may specify other program requirements as appropriate (e.g. mix of courses in/out of the major, types of courses to be included – or ‘capstone,’ for example).

Only honors students may register for designated honors classes. The Director of Honors may authorize other non-honors courses to satisfy an honors class requirement.<sup>19</sup> In all such cases, courses counting for honors credit must formally be designated and identified as honors credit courses by the Director *before* they may satisfy upper division honors requirements.

Students who successfully complete the minimum six upper-division honors courses (including the two required courses) while maintaining the requisite minimum cumulative GPA of 3.4+ GPA in the major and 3.4+ GPA overall will be recognized with a ‘Temple Senior Honors Scholar’ designation on their transcript. Students completing a specific school or departmental honors program will be recognized as a ‘Temple Senior [school or department] Honors Scholar.’

### Teaching

All honors courses will be taught by designated honors faculty and will enroll only honors students. Exceptions can be made by the Director of Honors and, where appropriate, the local honors director. Such exceptions will normally be limited to circumstances involving graduate courses, independent study or non-honors courses for which honors credit is being sought.

Honors faculty will be eligible to receive from the Director of Honors financial support up to a maximum of \$1,250 per course for teaching-related costs incurred in teaching an honors course. For faculty mentoring an honors thesis, financial support up to a maximum of \$250 will be available. For a section of honors independent study, financial support up to a maximum of \$100 will be available. Honors teaching support funds are not available for non-honors courses.

### Governance

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<sup>17</sup> Honors independent study course instructors will be required to provide a syllabus to the Honors Director to be eligible for honors credit.

<sup>18</sup> See footnote 8 supra.

<sup>19</sup> Classes not restricted to honors students can provide honors credit. Examples include graduate courses taken for undergraduate credit and independent study classes involving non-honors students.

In instances where a particular school/college (e.g. Fox Business School) or department (e.g. Psychology) has its own upper-division honors program, a local honors director will administer that program. In all other instances, the Director of Honors will administer the upper-division honors program and will report to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies.

The Faculty Oversight Committee will review the operation of the university upper-division honors program and advise where needed. All local departmental honors directors will be ad hoc members of the honors oversight committee.

Temple's honors program will continue to encourage the development of departmental honors programs where appropriate. Such programs must meet the minimum upper-division honors requirements. This would require that the departmental program had sufficient honors faculty available to teach the courses, sufficient honors students to register for the courses and an ability to provide honors-only courses/sections. Any department with fewer than 25 upper-division honors program students would need to seek the approval of the provost before proposing a separate departmental honors program.<sup>20</sup>

In all cases, university policy with regard to admissions criteria, retention criteria and specific requirements of the upper-division honors program will supersede any conflicting policy established at the local (school/college or department) division.

**Evaluation and monitoring:**

The Director of Honors will maintain all data necessary to enable continuous monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the honors program at both the lower and upper divisions. The director will provide for the provost an annual report on the honors program. The Director of Honors will establish procedures to evaluate the quality and integrity of all honors courses (including each honors thesis and honors independent study course).

**Notes**

**1. Dates of official enactment and amendments:**

Adopted by the Board of Trustees on December 13, 2005.  
Amended July 15, 2010 to the new policy template.

**2. History:**

**Initial Policy Effective Date:**  
January 3, 2006

**3. Cross References/Appendix:**

None

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<sup>20</sup> Similarly, any department with an existing honors program and less than 25 upper division honors students may be asked to demonstrate its ability to provide the necessary courses for the maintenance of a distinct departmental honors program.