

HONORS PROGRAM

The OCC Honors Program provides an enriched collegiate experience for intellectually curious and highly motivated students. The Program celebrates the collaborative effort of students and instructors in reciprocal teaching-learning environments that promote student initiative, knowledge, curiosity about the world of ideas, and concern for current social issues.

Honors Courses

OCC Honors courses may be taken by OCC students who wish to engage in a more rigorous learning experience, whether or not they are enrolled in the Honors Program itself. The courses are challenging and demand a significant commitment of time for study and engagement. Honors instructors enhance the basic curriculum requirements of their classes by offering more opportunities for intensive study than are possible in most non-Honors sections. Freedom of inquiry and student discovery are stressed. The generally smaller Honors sections are intended to foster discussion, mastery of content, critical thinking, and analysis. Guest speakers, field trips and comprehensive research, including the presentation of results, further enhance many Honors sections.

Writing Skills and Honors Courses

While there are no prerequisites for Honors sections other than those that apply to non-Honors sections of the same courses, many Honors courses include scholarly reading and writing assignments, including research and essay-style exams. Strong college-level writing skills are critical to student success. Prior completion of, or concurrent enrollment in, English 100 or higher is strongly recommended.

Multiple Paths within Honors

Students enroll in the Honors Program for a variety of reasons and not all students are expected (or required) to pursue the same path or take advantage of the same benefits. In fact, certain benefits may not be available to all Honors students, depending on choice of major or target transfer school. Students are further advised that involvement in Honors Program on- and off-campus events, projects, academic conferences, creative works competitions and social gatherings are recommended. These activities provide a variety of personal development opportunities and may improve the likelihood of selection for transfer admission and scholarship awards.

Benefits of Enrollment

For all students enrolled:

- Close interaction with enthusiastic learners and passionate instructors
- Flexible, rigorous coursework emphasizing research, critical thinking and writing skills
- Added preparation for upper division coursework
- Opportunities to develop leadership and organizational skills through the Honors Student Council (HSC)
- Access to specialized Honors Counseling
- UCLA and UCI Library privileges
- Special activities, including guest speakers, seminars, field study, and social events
- Opportunities to present research and creative works at prestigious academic conferences

- Added preparation for upper division coursework
- Notation of each Honors course on transcripts
- Access to specialized Honors Counseling

Benefits of Certification

For students who choose to complete Honors Program certification requirements:

- Earn priority consideration for transfer admission to a number of respected four-year institutions, including UCLA and UCI
- Receive a notation on official OCC transcripts of Honors Program completion
- Earn the privilege of wearing the program's distinctive black and silver Honors regalia and receiving recognition in the graduation program

Honors Program Enrollment Procedures

Students may apply to the OCC Honors Program year-round, if they believe they have met all of the enrollment criteria.

Successful applicants will:

- Be in good standing with the OCC Dean of Students Office and adhere to the Coast Community College District Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures
- Be currently enrolled in OCC classes
- Complete an Honors Orientation prior to submitting an application (Visit the Honors Program website to make a reservation for an orientation session.)
- Meet the English composition requirement in one of the following ways:
 - Receive an exemption from English 100 with an AP exam score of 3 or higher; or
 - Complete at least one qualifying English composition course with a grade of A or B: English 100, 101, 101H, 102, 102H, or 109.

Submit an Application to the Honors Program

Students who graduated from high school less than one year prior to submitting an Honors Program application AND who have completed fewer than 12 units of letter-graded college coursework MUST:

- Have a minimum final cumulative high school GPA of 3.25 for grades 9-12; AND
- Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 in all college coursework completed

All students who have completed 12 or more units of letter-graded college coursework MUST:

- Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 in all college coursework completed

Note: Applicants are required to submit transcripts from all colleges attended. Grades of D, F, or NP earned within the Coast Community College District at any time, or at another college during the two years prior to entering any of the CCCD colleges, must be "excluded" through course repetition or academic renewal. Incomplete grades of ID, IF, or INP must be resolved with a final grade for course completion. The total

combined cumulative GPA will be calculated on GPA units and GPA points earned at all institutions attended.

Continuing Enrollment

After enrolling in the Honors Program, students will receive continuing benefits provided that they:

- Remain in good standing with the OCC Dean of Students Office and adhere to the Coast Community College District Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures
- Remain enrolled in OCC classes or file a notification for a “Leave of Absence” with the Honors Office for up to one year
- Meet with an Honors Counselor at least once each academic year (preferably each semester before registering for the next semester’s classes)
- Complete at least one Honors course within one year of initial enrollment
- Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 in all transferable coursework and avoid grades below C (Grades of D, F, NP, ID, IF, or INP must be resolved the following semester through course repetition or successful completion. If eligible for Academic Renewal, a written notification must be filed with the Honors Office.)

Completion Requirements

Special recognition is awarded to transferring or graduating students enrolled in the Honors Program who meet the following requirements:

- Complete a minimum of 15 units of Honors coursework, distributed over at least three different subjects, with a letter grade of C or higher earned in each
- Earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50 in all transferable coursework, including courses taken at other institutions
- Earn a grade of A or B in at least one qualifying English composition course (English 100, 101, 101H, 102, 102H, 109) or receive an exemption from English 100 with an AP score of 3 or higher
- Obtain an exclusion for all grades of D, F, or NP through course repetition or academic renewal prior to the start of the final semester, and earn a passing grade in all previous “Incomplete” courses.

Certification Requirements

Eligibility for Honors transfer priority requires that students meet applicable university transfer requirements AND Honors Program certification criteria: general education breadth, selective-major prerequisites, and completion of at least 12 units of Honors coursework before the start of the student’s final semester at OCC. (Up to three of the required 15 total Honors units may be in progress at the time certification is requested.)

Up to one-half of UC-transferable Honors units earned at another college may be accepted toward Honors Program completion at OCC. (Submit official transcripts to the Honors Office for a determination.)

Exceptions to Policies

Exceptions to policies for enrollment, completion or certification may be requested through the appeals process. For further information, contact the Honors Office.