



HONORS COLLEGE

COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

*Cultivating Creativity
Inspiring Collaboration
Reimagining Education
Building Worlds*



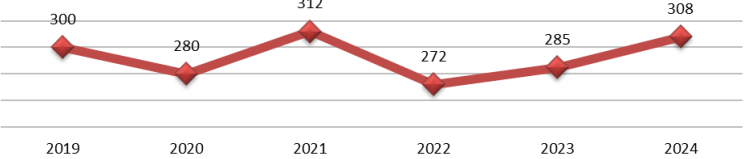
**Challenging Minds
for a
Changing World**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2024-2025**



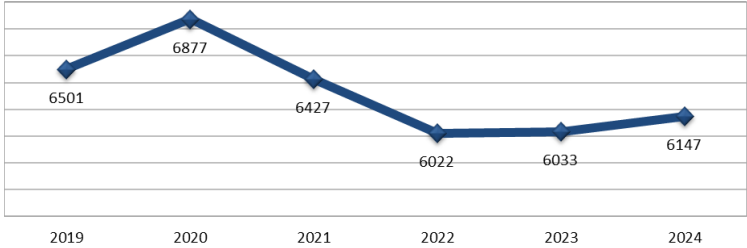
BY THE NUMBERS

Honors Enrollment



308 Honors UG Enrollment
5% of CSU UG Enrollment

CSU Enrollment

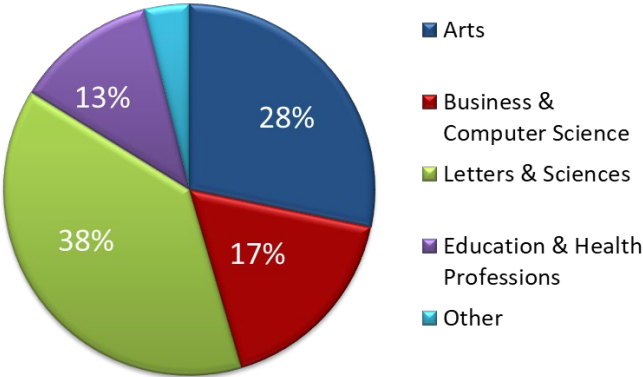


147 Majors in
 Interdisciplinary Studies

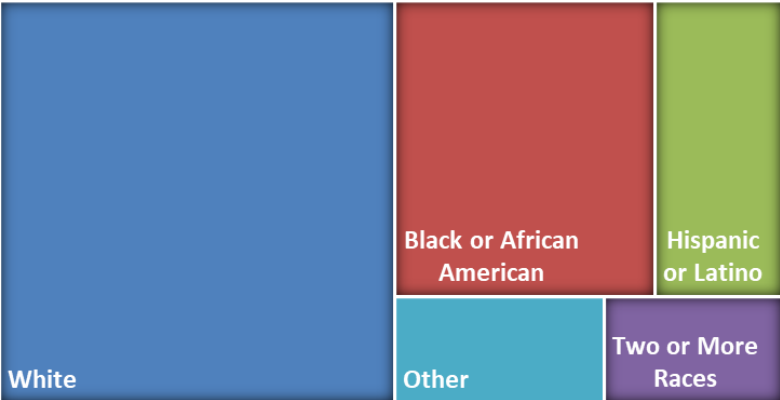
455 Students served
 by the Honors College

22% Pursuing Minors
11% Double Majors

Colleges



Diversity



Fall 2024 **87%** Retained
 Six-year graduation rate
 of Fall 2019 cohort **71%**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Embracing Change as a Catalyst for Growth and Innovation	1
Faculty Cup Winners & Nominees	3
Honors College Curriculum	4
Engagement & High Impact Practices	4
First-Year Seminar ~ Team-Based Problem Solving	5
Honors Enhanced Classes	8
Interdisciplinary Capstone Course ~ Great Conversations	9
Honors Enrichment	11
Our Graduates	13
Senior Projects & Theses	13
Honors Pins, Regalia, & Ceremonies	18
Student Activities ~ Serving & Leading	19
Honoris Causa Officers 2024 -2025	20
Honors College Enrollment Trends	21
Attracting High Achieving Students	21
Recruiting New Students To CSU	21
Recruiting Undergraduates to the Honors College	22
Honors Student by Academic Program	23
Scholarships and Honors College Advancement	24
Interdisciplinary Studies	27
Honors College Staff & Faculty	28
Advisory Boards & Committees	29
Honors Advisory Board	29
Honors Education Committee	30
National Scholarship & Awards Committee	30
Appendices 2024-25	30

EMBRACING CHANGE AS A CATALYST FOR GROWTH AND INNOVATION

In the Honors College, we recognize that change can feel daunting—but it's also the driving force behind personal growth and meaningful innovation. As college students navigate this transformative time in their lives, our programs help them embrace uncertainty, challenge convention, and strive for excellence in themselves. In 2024-25, students actively participating in the Honors College now constitute 5% of Columbus State University's undergraduates. Put another way, **one in every twenty students in CSU classrooms is an honors student.** Through their curiosity, engagement, and commitment to excellence, these students help shape and elevate the learning environment across the university.

At the heart of **the Honors College is a commitment to intellectual exploration.** We foster a culture that prizes curiosity over conformity and encourages students to ask difficult questions rather than accept easy answers. Through our convocations, students engage with ideas that challenge their perspectives and deepen their understanding of the world around them. Honors courses are designed not simply to convey information, but to cultivate independent learning, meaningful collaboration, and fearless inquiry. In seminars freed from the pressures of traditional evaluations, students discover the joy of learning for its own sake and explore topics from artificial intelligence to the value of higher education.

Our faculty members play a critical role in creating this environment. They welcome fresh perspectives, encourage thoughtful debate, and inspire students to examine long-held beliefs with openness and intellectual rigor. The result is a dynamic academic experience that broadens horizons, strengthens professional and graduate school preparation, and equips students to thrive in an ever-changing world.

The academic year provided a powerful reminder that change can arrive unexpectedly. At the beginning of the year, the Honors College experienced the sudden loss of beloved Honors Faculty Fellow Dr. Scott Wilkerson. Dr. Wilkerson had been scheduled to lead a course on "Dreams and Dreaming," and his passing left a profound void in our community. As we mourned the loss of a gifted teacher and cherished colleague, we were also called to adapt.



As so often happens at Columbus State, **our community responded with generosity and commitment.** Dr. Ed Helton, retired philosopher and longtime servant leader of the university, volunteered to teach a seminar entitled *The Search for Truth*. The course proved especially timely. In an era when technological advances, particularly in artificial intelligence, and broader societal

changes increasingly challenge our understanding of what is true, students engaged deeply with questions that could not have been more relevant.



As the academic year drew to a close, the Honors College experienced another significant transition when Dr. Ryan Lynch accepted an opportunity to become Director of the Honors Program at The Citadel. While we will miss his contributions to our students and community, **we celebrate Dr. Lynch's success and wish him the very best in this exciting new chapter.** He leaves as his legacy our annual Honors Convocation and winter colloquia, where our students deepen their friendships through surprisingly intellectual debates about banning Tik-Tok or labelling The Lion King as the best Disney movie of all time. Many of our honors students will benefit from his mentorship for years to come.

Taken together, these moments of achievement, challenge, loss, and transition illustrate a central truth: change is inevitable, but growth is a choice. The Honors College community continues to choose growth by adapting to new realities, pursuing meaningful questions, and embracing innovation in all its forms. The accomplishments of **the 455 students we serve** through the Interdisciplinary Studies and Honors programs, including the remarkable distinction that **all five Faculty Cup nominees came from these programs**, demonstrate the enduring value of our mission. As we reflect on the past year, we do so with gratitude for the resilience of our students, faculty, staff, and supporters, and with confidence that the future will bring new opportunities to learn, lead, and thrive.



FACULTY CUP WINNERS & NOMINEES

The Honors College is exceptionally proud to celebrate this year's Faculty Cup winners and nominees, a remarkable group of students whose achievements reflect the very best of academic excellence, leadership, service, and innovation. The Honors College was proud to serve each of them.

The Faculty Cup winner, **Kennedy Buckner**, is a graduating Honors senior majoring in English who distinguished herself through outstanding scholarship and creativity. From presenting research across Georgia to earning a prestigious Leadership Alliance Mellon Initiative fellowship at the University of Virginia, Her leadership as President of the Black Student Union, Vice President of Sigma Tau Delta, and Press Secretary for SGA, combined with her efforts to establish a library of African American texts, has left a lasting impact on our campus community.



The other nominees served by the Honors College included **Tyler Fleming** an Interdisciplinary Studies major and exceptional ROTC cadet, who exemplifies the values of leadership, integrity, and service. He has balanced rigorous academic and military commitments while earning the respect of faculty and peers alike through his dedication, discipline, and character. Earth and Space Science major **Jarrett Huckaby** was also nominated since he combines a passion for scientific discovery with a commitment to education. An Honors College scholar, researcher, and apprentice teacher, Jarrett has presented his work at major academic conferences and is already inspiring the next generation of STEM learners. History major **Anna LaBarbera** has excelled both in the classroom and as a student-athlete. Her contributions to curriculum development and educational programming through the National Infantry Museum demonstrate her passion for history, teaching, and community engagement. Finally, **Lillian Patterson** has distinguished herself through academic excellence, international experiences, professional internships, and extensive service. Her leadership, global perspective, and commitment to helping others embody the Honors College mission.

Together, these Faculty Cup winners showcase the extraordinary talent, ambition, and impact of Honors College students. We could not be prouder of their accomplishments and the example they set for our entire university community.

HONORS COLLEGE CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is designed to produce graduates who can successfully work in teams, understand how to examine topics from multiple perspectives, and possess the skills to conduct independent inquiry. By the time they graduate, every honors student will engage in at least four high impact experiences that shape their education:

First-Year Seminar ~ to broaden their perspective and learn to work in teams

Interdisciplinary Capstone ~ to view the world from multiple viewpoints

Internationalized Courses ~ to develop cultural competence and more global perspectives

Undergraduate Research ~ to deepen their knowledge in their field

These experiences, coupled with honors core courses, contracts, and advising, allow students to design an undergraduate experience filled with curricular and co-curricular experiences that help them achieve their goals. The following sections describe the opportunities we provided to our students during the academic year 2024-25, and a full listing of the honors curriculum can be found in Appendix A.

Engagement & High Impact Practices

The Honors College point system rewards students for customizing their education with both curricular and co-curricular experiences that enrich their collegiate experience and build critical professional and leadership skills. All of our graduates must engage in first year experiences, international education, undergraduate research, and our capstone course; academia often refers to these learning opportunities as "High Impact Practices." By the end of spring 2025, 67% of our honors community completed their first-year seminar; 23% completed our capstone course; and 39% participated in internationally-themed courses or seminars or were fortunate enough to study abroad. In addition, our students documented that they had participated in internships (6%), independent studies or honors contracts (16%), community service (19%), and campus leadership (13%).

Our Vision

The Honors College will make Columbus State University a first-choice institution for students who strive for excellence by providing transformational learning experiences, undergraduate research, and interdisciplinary studies

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide an innovatively delivered curriculum for high-achieving students that advances the intellectual growth and recognition of the university.

First-Year Seminar ~ Team-Based Problem Solving

The first-year experience for honors students is a seminar, *ITDS 1779H: Scholarship Across the Disciplines*. It is designed not only to orient students to the Honors College curriculum, but to build essential skills they will need to successfully complete our curriculum and become engaged members of the communities they will one day join. In the course, students learn about the variety of research and scholarship in academia, how to write grants and scholarly papers, and how to work and lead effective teams. Each section of the course contains a signature assignment that solves a real problem based upon a topic that is chosen by students who took the course in a prior semester.

Researching the Problem. In 2024-25, students in our different sections investigated problems related to class themes such as the advancement of Artificial Intelligence and the challenges of Mental Health. We challenged our students to identify a problem the class theme and “pitch” a solution to spend a fictitious a \$10,000 to improve their local community. Professors and community members attended the final project presentations, offering valuable insights and feedback to the students.

Projects on Artificial Intelligence



AI in Medicine: Detecting Cancer
A Gallery Showcase ~ AI Generated Art
An Educational Website on Responsible Use of AI
Therapy Chat Bots for College Students
Educating Elderly about the Risks of Deep Fakes
Identifying Deep Fakes ~ TSYS Computer Science Students

Projects on Mental Health

Nutrition & Mental Health ~ Cooking Classes & Supplying Cookware
in College Dorms
Cougar Dash ~ A 5K Run to Support Mental Health
Rebounding ~ Using Trampolines to Combat Inactivity
Baby Indigo ~ An App to Help Postpartum Depression
Dog Yoga ~ Alleviating the Risks of Loneliness
Bridging the Nutrition Knowledge Gap ~ A new course at CSU



Honors Core Education

The First-Year Seminar experience is the cornerstone of our students' honors core education. In addition, students enroll in at least one honors core course (offered at the 1000-2000 level) which provides them more opportunities for in-depth analysis than they might otherwise receive. All core classes are designed to broaden the student's education by emphasizing multiple academic viewpoints, engaging students in robust discussions and assigning team projects.

HONORS CORE COURSES		Capacity	Actual
Summer 2024			
ITDS 1145H	Comparative Arts (Online)	18	16
Fall 2024			
ITDS 1145H	Comparative Arts	18	18
HIST 2112H	U.S. History since 1865	18	17
ITDS 1779H	Scholarship Across the Disciplines (RiverPark)	18	18
ITDS 1779H	Scholarship Across the Disciplines (Main)	18	17
ITDS 1779H	Scholarship Across the Disciplines (Online)	18	17
PHYS 1125H	Physics of Color & Sound	18	12
POLS 1101H	American Government	18	18
Spring 2025			
ITDS 1779H	Scholarship Across the Disciplines (RiverPark)	18	12
ITDS 1779H	Scholarship Across the Disciplines (Main)	18	15
COMM 1110H	Public Speaking	Enhanced	5
ENGL 2111H	World Literature I	Enhanced	9
MATH 1001H	Quantitative Skills & Reasoning	Enhanced	4
MUSC 1100H	Music Appreciation	Enhanced	6

In 2024-25, we enrolled 185 students in core classes, filling 89% of all overall seats available. To ensure student engagement with the faculty, course capacities are limited to 18 students, and course enrollment is restricted to Honors College students and CSU students with a GPA greater than a 3.0. In our first-year seminary, we served 80 in our first-year seminars, which included one student who participated in the "Freshers" program. The Freshers program is a unique summer study abroad program for first-year students who travel to Oxford to study for two weeks in the Spencer House prior to starting in the fall.

89% Efficiency

185 Enrolled

Honors Enhanced Classes

This year, we piloted a new offering for our students, Honors Enhanced classes. The new initiative invites faculty to propose experiences that go beyond traditional classroom instruction by incorporating intellectually engaging, hands-on components. The enhancement experiences are structured as supplemental sections connected to a regular class, offering students a deeper dive into course themes. They may include additional meeting times where students participate in activities such as fieldwork, book clubs, service learning, or field trips—all designed to foster collaborative inquiry and connect academic concepts to real-world contexts. Through this model, students gain enriched perspectives while faculty can creatively expand learning opportunities within their disciplines.

Dr. Reba Wissner's Honors Enhanced Music Appreciation (MUSC 1100H)

Imagine a music appreciation course that doesn't just stay confined to the classroom—it hits the streets, virtually. Students in the Honors College explored the rich musical tapestry of Columbus, Georgia by creating an interactive, multimedia tour of local landmarks using Clio, a digital history platform. Their curated route took users through soulful stops like the Ma Rainey Museum, celebrating the “Mother of the Blues,” and the opulent Springer Opera House, once graced by world-renowned performers.



They spotlighted eclectic gems like Silvan Guitar Shop, a cozy haven for stringed-instrument lovers, and Blue Canary Records, a vinyl treasure trove where analog vibes still thrive. Sites like Temperance Hall and the Liberty Theatre added layers of cultural and historical depth, tying music to social movements and community storytelling.

Interdisciplinary Capstone Course ~ Great Conversations

Our HONS 3555 “Great Conversations” courses have always been among the most unique classes a student will take at Columbus State. Co-taught by a rotating pairing of professors every semester and on totally different topics, part of the value of our Great Conversations is that they push students to think differently. But there’s a secret behind these classes: they often really push our *professors* to teach in a new way, and to address topics in a form that challenges them, too.

In each course, we aim to provide unique opportunities for active engagement and experiential learning. In both the Summer of 2024 and the Spring of 2025, HONS 3555 was integrated with study abroad programs in Canada, Oxford, and Brazil and we offered two additional courses on our campus. In total 55 students joined in conversations and brought their unique perspectives to a rich academic discussion.



The Search for Truth, Fall 2024

by Dr. Ed Helton and Dr. Cindy Ticknor

This Fall semester, however, was even more different than usual. The sudden passing of beloved Honors Faculty Fellow Dr. Scott Wilkerson, who was scheduled to lead the course on the topic of “Dreams and Dreaming,” meant that the college needed to adapt. We wanted to honor Dr. Wilkerson’s interests while also appreciating that no professor was going to be able to teach the topic in the way he would have. But thankfully, as it so often does, the Columbus State community came together to adjust.

Dean Ticknor reached out to Dr. Ed Helton, a retired philosopher who has served CSU in many roles over the years including as the head of the Leadership Institute, to lead a course entitled “The Search for Truth.” In so many ways, the class fit this moment especially well. The very nature of “truth” has become elusive as both technology and society have shifted. In addition to thinking about the long-term meaning of truth from the perspective of a philosopher, our students were joined by a wide variety of professors from around campus to provide many approaches to the theme, which included Dean Ticknor (Mathematics Education) herself, along with Dr. Lester (Vice President of External Affairs), Dr. Lynch (History), and Dr. Vidal (Political Science), Dr. Susan Hrach (English Literature), Director Mike McFalls (Pasaquan & Bo Bartlett Center), and Dr. Dan Rose (Counseling Center). As is the tradition of Great Conversations, the students’ final presentations engaged everyone as they explore difficult questions such as “Historic Revisionism: Is it bad or good?” and “Social Media: Who are the gatekeepers?”

Climate Disasters in Science & Literature, Spring 2024

by Dr. Kim Shaw and Dr. Judi Livingston

During the spring, our “Great Conversations” class was on the topic of Climate Disasters in Science and Literature, co-taught by Dr. Shaw (Physics) and Dr. Livingston (English). They engaged students with the issues by using the type of interdisciplinary approach that makes these Honors experiences so valuable. Throughout their time in the course students interrogated the science of a changing climate and strengthened their ability to evaluate the scientific reliability of climate sources.



The Honors College Faculty Fellow program develops cohorts of highly trained faculty who craft our students’ educational experiences and act as ambassadors for the Honors College. Each fellow learns every aspect of our curriculum during a two-year rotation, including team-teaching *Great Conversations*, core courses and seminars, and working with our seniors as they develop their research projects. We would like to highlight Faculty Fellow Dr. Kim Shaw for her outstanding contributions to the Honors College this year.

Dr. Kim Shaw

Faculty Fellow Fall 2024-Spring 2026

Professor

Department of Physics

Honors Enrichment

Honors students have the option to take free, ungraded enrichment seminars designed to develop their love of learning without highly intensive exams or graded term papers. We offer enrichment courses designed to expand their thinking about academic subjects (HONS 3000), develop their international cultural competence (HONS 3010), and enhance their personal development (HONS 3020). This academic year we offered the following:

HONS 3000 Academic Enhancement		HONS 3010 Global Perspectives	
Video Game Music	11	Introduction to Arabic Language	18
Crucial Conversations	12	International Film & Events	14
The Bake-Off Challenge	16	International Current Events	23
Science of Beverages	18		
HONS 3020 Personal Enrichment			
Serial Screeners			13
Restorative Yoga			12

HONS 3000: The Great Bake-Off Challenge

by Dr. Cindy Ticknor and Mrs. Gail Greenblatt

In Spring 2025, Honors students turned up the heat in the “Bake Off Challenge” Seminar, a flavorful fusion of culinary exploration and friendly rivalry. Each week brought a fresh theme—think vibrant salads, comforting soups, and decadent desserts—as students whipped up imaginative creations in their own kitchens. To keep things spicy, they were tasked with incorporating global seasonings, expanding their palates and perspectives.



Dishes were judged by Dr. Ticknor, and special guest Ms. Gail Greenblatt, a well-known local food critic. The grand finale? A field trip to the award-winning EPIC Restaurant, where students cooked alongside renowned Chef Jamie Keating. They plated up Southern-inspired gourmet fare, including stacked fried green tomatoes, earthy mushroom risotto, and luxuriously dipped strawberries—all with presentation worthy of a culinary magazine spread. More than just a seminar, it was a delicious journey from novice to next-level chef.



HONS 3000: Science of Beverages

by Dr. Dawn Fraizer and the Honors College Staff

One of the most buzzworthy Honors seminars this semester was Honors 3000: The Science of Beverages—an experience that blended chemistry, culture, and curiosity in every sip. Students embarked on five immersive Saturday field trips to uncover the secrets behind drinks ranging from pure water to fizzy sodas, bold beers, elegant wines, and complex distilled spirits. Each excursion paired scientific inquiry with hands-on discovery, offering a

flavorful twist on traditional learning. At Nutwood Winery in LaGrange, Georgia, students of age enjoyed delicious tastings, mouthwatering food, and lively games while learning about fermentation and viticulture straight from the source. Another highlight was the World of Coke in Atlanta, where they explored the global history of the Coca-Cola brand—from its original formula to dazzling international advertising campaigns. Surrounded by vintage artifacts and marketing marvels, students gained a deeper appreciation for how science, storytelling, and branding all flow together in the world of beverages.

HONS 3000: Video Game Music

By Dr. Reba Wissner

One of our premier honors seminars this semester was Honors 3000: Video Game Music. This seminar was hosted by Dr. Reba Wissner, and honors students were able to learn and explore the connection between music and video games along with the history of video game music. This picture is from a session where students used a scene from "Untitled Goose Game" to create Foley Art and recreate some sound effects.



HONS 3020: Serial Screeners

by Dr. Cindy Ticknor

In a seminar tailor-made for devoted binge-watchers, students dove into the art of cinematic storytelling with a sharp lens on character development, visual style, and intricate plotlines. Honors 3000: Serial Screeners was more than just a class—it was a deep dive into what makes modern television so compelling. The course revolved around a series selected democratically by the students, giving them ownership of the narrative they'd unpack together. This semester's pick: Hulu's critically acclaimed series *The Bear*. From the tension-filled kitchens to the raw emotional arcs, the class dissected each episode, sparking lively debates and thoughtful discussions. They examined

everything from narrative pacing and shot composition to themes of grief, ambition, and identity—all through the lens of this gritty, award-winning drama.

OUR GRADUATES

The Honors College values undergraduate research, seeing it as a vital opportunity to engage students deeply in their discipline while providing them practical experience that enhances their traditional classroom training. Our curriculum requires students to complete honors contracts before beginning their senior undergraduate research project under the guidance of our expert faculty, and our point system rewards students when they disseminate their work at conferences and in publications.

Senior Projects & Theses

In 2024-25, the following twelve students graduate from the Honors College.



**Felicity Acosta – B.S. Mathematics
Fall 2025**

Thesis: *Intertwined Triples of QuadForms*

Mentored by: Dr. Eugen Ionascu

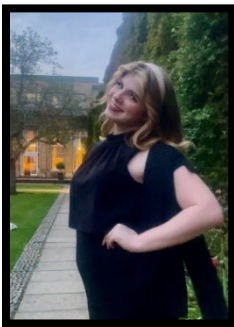
Notes: Felicity has started her career working in Columbus.

**Joshua Adams – B.S. Biology, Competitive Premed
Program, Spring 2025**

Thesis: *Behavioral and Physiological Responses of Cyprinella venusta to Inter- and Intraspecific Acoustic Signals.*

Mentored by: Dr. Dan Holt

Notes: Following graduation, Josh will apply to medical school while continuing both research and clinical endeavors.



Mary Claire Buchanan – B.F.A. Art, Fall 2024

Thesis: *Call the Midwife: Med & Hist Accuracy*

Mentored by: Dr. Reba Wissner

Notes: Mary Claire plans to continue performing locally while pursuing opportunities in nonprofit and philanthropic work with a focus on supporting the arts in Georgia and the Southeast.

Amanda Byars – B.F.A. Theatre Performance, Spring 2025

Thesis: *Stop Suffering for Your Art*

Mentored by: Professor David Turner

Notes: After graduation, Amanda is moved to Minnesota, where she will complete a 10- month contract with Commonweal Theatre Company, serving as an acting apprentice and performing the role of Cordelia in their production of King Lear.



Marcos Falck – B.A. Communications, Spring 2025

Thesis: *Crossing Borders*

Mentored by: Dr. Adam Bova

Notes: For the future he's preparing to start grad school this fall with a double masters (MA) in Media and Communication studies and a (MFA) Motion Pictures Art focused on Production at Florida State University.

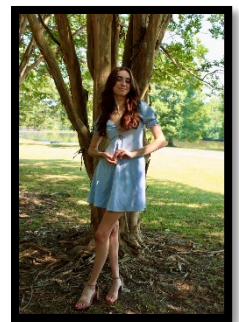


Cassidy Fine – B.S. Biology, Spring 2025

Thesis: *Quantification of Perceived Audible Chemical Changes: Numerical Assessment of Experiments for Introductory Chemistry Students with Visual Impairment*

Mentored by: Dr. Dan Holt

Notes: After graduation, Cassidy plans on working towards becoming a Nurse Practitioner by obtaining her Master's in Nursing. Ultimately, she would like to work as a pediatric oncology nurse, caring for children and their families affected by cancer.



Celeste Grantham – B.S. Elementary Education, Spring 2025

Thesis: *Enhancing student outcomes through innovative teaching strategies*

Mentored by: Dr. Dawn Frazier

Notes: Celeste plans to attend graduate school in the future to pursue the intersectionality between education and psychology in the school setting. She hopes to become a point of resource for both students and teachers in elementary schools.



Bianca Hampel – B.S. Mathematics, Minor in Physics, Fall 2024

Thesis: *Torricelli's Inequality and turn-up constant*

Mentored by: Dr. Eugen Ionascu

Notes: After graduation, Bianca plans to work at Aflac in the actuarial department where she worked as an intern during the summer of 2023.



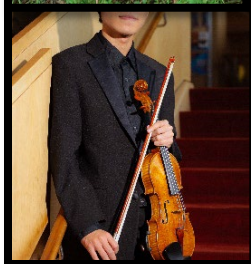


Jarrett Huckaby – B.S. Earth & Space Science, Spring 2025

Thesis: *Interdisciplinary Unit of Study for Eighth Grade Math and Science Classes*

Mentored by: Professor Kenneth Jones

Notes: After graduation, Jarrett will be teaching high school science and then return to obtain his master's after a few years in the classroom. His goal is to earn his doctorate and work his way up in administration.



Kangin Joo – B.M. Music Performance, Spring 2025

Thesis: *The Future of Classical Music Concertization in the United States: An Analysis of Structural Challenges and the Case of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra*

Mentored by: Dr. Reba Wissner

Notes: After graduation, Kangin plans to continue his education with a master's degree in music performance.

Lauren Katzfey – B.B.A. Business Administration, Minor Political Science

Thesis: *Mind the Gap: Sex Orientation Impact Salary*

Mentored by: Dr. Phil Bryant

Notes: Lauren was accepted to law school at the University of Georgia, where she plans to start in fall 2025.



Sam Kimball – B.S. Earth & Space Science, Fall 2024

Thesis: *Quantum Gravity Current State*

Mentored by: Dr. Rosa Williams

Notes: Sam is currently employed as a Planetarium Specialist at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama.

Apoorva Kollaram – B.S. Chemistry, Biochemistry Concentration, Spring 2025

Thesis: *Purification of Recombinant GFP-Preptin Fusion Protein*

Mentored by: Dr. Johnthan Meyers

Notes: Apoorva plans to pursue a Doctor of Pharmacy degree at the University of Georgia to become a pharmacist.





Ma'Lon Lane – B.S. Earth & Space Science, Fall 2024

Thesis: *Lights, Camera, Action: A Students Perspective on Reimagining Film Production Opportunities*

Mentored by: Professor Cremel Burney

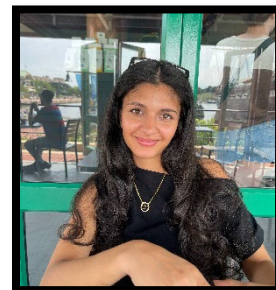
Notes: Ma'Lon's journey now takes her out of the south as she ventures away from the Peach State for graduate school. Once she receives her MBA, she plans to become a Healthcare Administrator while exploring a career in the film industry.

Yasmin Mezayek – B.A. English Language/Literature, Spring 2025

Thesis: *Using Lacan's theory to analyze Literature*

Mentored by: Dr. Judy Livingston

Notes: Yasmin was awarded a full-tuition scholarship to the University of Alabama School of Law, a \$4,000 stipend, and a guaranteed research position. Yasmin looks forward to attending and pursuing her dream of becoming a lawyer.



Collin Miller – B.S. Biology, Pre-Vet, Spring 2025

Thesis: *Dissolved Heavy Metal Concentrations in the Muscle Tissue of Bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*) in the Chattahoochee River Drainage, Columbus, Georgia*

Mentored by: Dr. Michael Newbrey

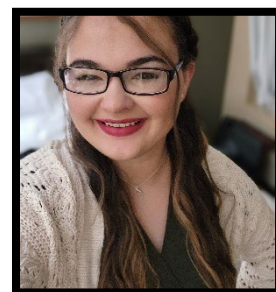
Notes: Collin was accepted to veterinary school at Auburn University and the University of Georgia. She plans to attend the University of Georgia in August.

Alyssa Schmitz – B.S. Health Science, Minor, Biomedical Sciences, Spring 2025

Thesis: *Uncovering Experimental Clues: The Role of Chemistry In Combining The Analysis of Latent Fingerprints and Arson Investigations*

Mentored by: Dr. Kerri Taylor

Notes: After Graduation, Alyssa will be applying to medical schools to become a doctor one day.



Lizzie Williams – B.A. Music Performance, Fall 2024

Thesis: *Ear Training & Music Theory*

Mentored by: Professor Michell Folta

Matthew Woods – B.A. English Literature, Fall 2024

Thesis: *Canterbury Tales Rhetoric*

Mentored by: Dr. Shannon Godlove

Notes: Matthew plans to attend law school after completing his undergraduate studies.



Honors Pins, Regalia, & Ceremonies

Each year we recognize our graduating seniors, those who have won awards and reached milestones, and those who support our Honors College. In the winter, we host an intimate affair, the Black & White Ceremony, for our fall graduates, and in the spring, we host our Spring Ceremony honoring outstanding faculty, alumni, graduates, and our champions: The Laureate Society.



Graduates receive their Honors Regalia at each event and are able to take a moment to share what they learned from their thesis as well as thank those who helped them complete their project. In addition to the regalia, all students who have reached 80% of the honors college requirements receive their Honors Pin. As an interdisciplinary college, the Honors Pin allows us to acknowledge and connect with alumni whose long-term goals may not require the completion of an undergraduate degree at

CSU, such as engineers and pharmacists, and all who have made commitments to support the Honors College. It is a milestone that students achieve as they begin their thesis work, and we like to acknowledge that accomplishment and give our students something that they can always wear proudly. This helps students remember their commitment to life-long learning, looking at the world through multiple lenses, striving for excellence, and supporting each other as they take risks and make our community and our world a better place.



The Black & White Ceremony

This event was hosted on Wednesday December 4, 2024 at the Loft on Broadway. The Black & White Ceremony is always one of our favorite events! During this event we honored two Honors College graduates and seven students who received their Honors College pin. Dr. Stuart Rayfield, CSU President, was also in attendance to present the Honors College graduation cords.

Spring Awards Ceremony

The annual Awards Ceremony was hosted at Green Island Country Club on May 4, 2025. Over 80 students, faculty, and guests were in attendance. The annual Awards Ceremony is our biggest award event of the year as we honor our graduates and their committed faculty.



STUDENT ACTIVITIES ~ SERVING & LEADING

Honoris Causa is our registered student organization which serves as an honors society. The members of the Honoris Causa plan service and social events throughout the year after annually inducting the newest members in the fall. The second group is the Honors Student Advisory Council. The Honors Student Advisory Council meets regularly to provide feedback on Honors College programming and makes suggestions for improvement.

Honoris Causa Traditions

Back to School Picnic

Honoris Causa once again hosted a welcome back party outdoors at Lake Oliver. It is always a great way to start the year off right as our students enjoy lake time, games, and food before the semester begins. At the end of the year, the officers and seniors enjoyed a final May Day together, remembering their four years at the lake.



Community Service Events

Many honors students are also in our Servant Leadership program, so several community service events are hosted by Honoris Causa throughout the year. Not only did the Honors College fill two buses at the CSU Day of Service, but Honoris Causa also organized volunteer work with the Columbus Road Runners, Feeding the Valley, and Oxbow Meadows.

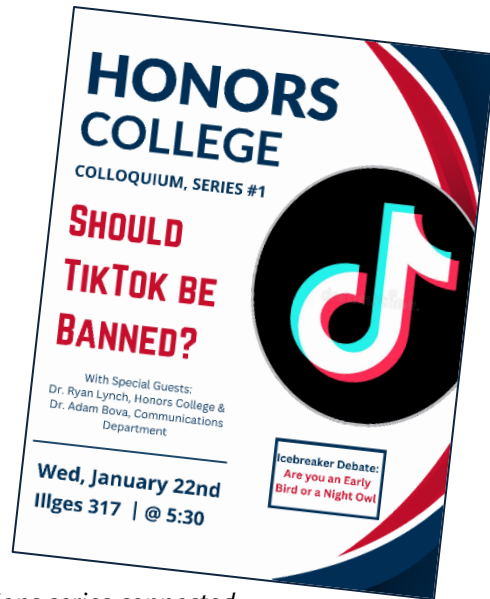
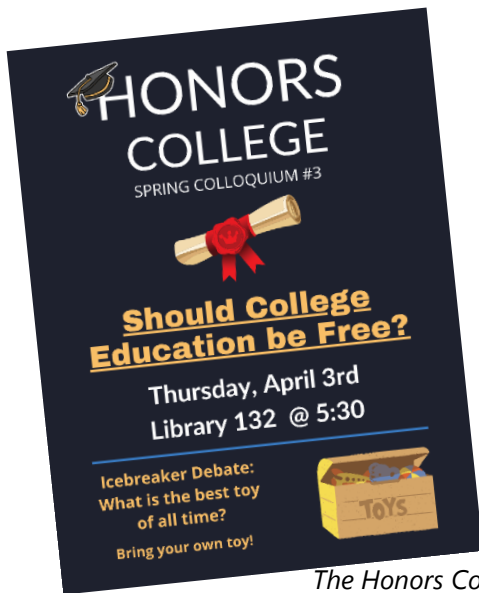
Events for 2024-2025

- CSU Day of Service
- Study Hours
- Uptown Tree Trail
- Trunk or Treat
- St. Patrick's Day Scavenger Hunt
- Friendsgiving
- Study Abroad Fair
- Ice Cream Social



Honors Spring Colloquia Series

This semester also saw the return of our Spring Colloquium Series where students debated hot topics of today. Each session started with a light icebreaker, such as, "Are you an Early Bird or a Night Owl?" From there we dived into more controversial topics like whether TikTok should be banned or if we could survive a long-term blackout.



The Honors College Crucial Conversations series connected our students to our community in engaging discussions.

Honoris Causa Officers 2024 -2025

We are so proud of the leadership team of Honoris Causa, who creatively kept our students engaged and motivated throughout the year.

Jarrett Huckaby & Taylor Wicklund, Co-Presidents

Fiza Khan, Vice President Main Campus
Lauren Katzfey, Secretary Main Campus
Jagrishi Settupalli, Treasurer
Rohan Shah, SGA Representative

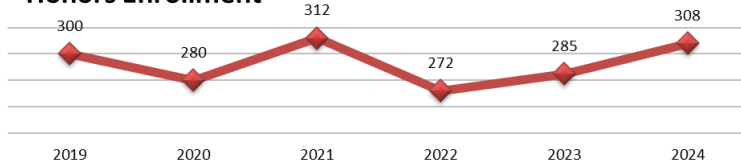
Charlie Hearn, Vice President RiverPark
Lilly Patterson, Secretary RiverPark
Victoria Trieu, Social Relations

HONORS COLLEGE ENROLLMENT TRENDS

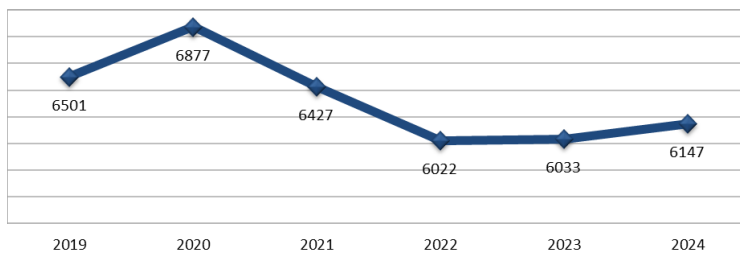
In Fall 2024, we enrolled 308 students, which represents 5% of CSU. Our first-year retention rate was 87%, which is the percentage of our first-time, full-time students who enrolled in Fall 2023 who returned as sophomores at CSU in Fall 2024.

Our six-year graduation rate was impressive, with 71% of the 2019-20 cohort of first-time, full-time honors students graduating from CSU. Of that cohort, 27% graduated with their honors seal.

Honors Enrollment



CSU Enrollment



5% of CSU
Undergraduate
Enrollment

Attracting High Achieving Students

The Honors College recruits and supports high-achieving students, offering a rigorous curriculum that helps them achieve their academic, personal, and professional goals. Raising the level of academic discussions in all classes by recruiting students, we also have the goal to improve the overall retention and graduation rates of Columbus State University. Historically, honors students have higher retention and graduation rates, which means they tend to persist in their studies much longer than traditional students. Not only does recruiting high-achieving students benefit the academic environment and institutional reputation, it also contributes to tuition revenue and formula funding for CSU.

Recruiting New Students To CSU

Recruiting new students to CSU is one of the primary missions of the Honors College, and we host two events dedicated to attracting students to CSU each year. We also increased our outreach using directed, personalized email. During the fall, we invited applicants to our Presidential Scholars Interview Day, and hosted a second interview day in the spring for our Tower Scholarships. Students were provided opportunities to meet faculty, learn about servant leadership, financial aid and housing before

their interviews. Each student interviewed individually with two judges, typically a faculty member and a donor asking questions, and then participating in a group interview led by current honors students. Ninety-nine first-time full-time students applied to the Honors College this season, and 71% of the 93 students we admitted have enrolled for classes in Fall 2024. Our applicants' average grade point average and test scores remain strong. Admission criteria is listed in Appendix B.

Applications Trends for Fall 2019 to 2024

	Total	Not Local	Perfect 4.0	Admitted	Admission Rate	GPA	SAT	ACT	Yield
Fall 2024	99	65%	23	93	94%	3.80	1187	24	71%
Fall 2023	107	59%	30	102	95%	3.81	1187	25	63%
Fall 2022	79	62%	30	73	92%	3.80	1185	27	84%
Fall 2021	105	59%	35	100	95%	3.78	1240	26	66%
Fall 2020	75	60%	27	64	85%	3.85	1232	28	72%
Fall 2019	103	25%	21	87	84%	3.81	1161	26	72%

Recruiting Undergraduates to the Honors College

Any student who has earned a grade point average at or above 3.4 after completing fifteen credit hours is eligible to enroll in the Honors College. Our Honors Community Point System is ideal for undergraduate and transfer students who can apply for credit based on exemplary educational activities they completed prior to enrolling in the college. Since the point system is competency based, participation in internships, study abroad, or research prior to enrolling can result in points earned.

Financial Support for Honors College Undergraduates. All students are eligible to apply for Honors Educational Activity Grants to support co-curricular activities. Undergraduates reaching their junior year may apply for tuition scholarships which are awarded based upon financial need and commitment to successfully completing the Honors College curriculum. (See Appendix C for scholarship policies and procedures).

Honors Student by Academic Program

The Honors College strives to bring together diverse students and to enhance the academic environment with unique perspectives and an array of interests and experiences. Not only are we committed to attracting all majors, but we are dedicated to ensuring that all students have access to an education that is commensurate with their abilities. In 2024-25, our students were pursuing majors in all academic colleges, with the largest representation from the Department of Biology and the Schwob School of Music.

Enrollment by Degree-Granting Colleges			
College of the Arts	28%	College of Letters & Science	38%
Art Department	16	Biology Department	28
Communication Department	13	Chemistry Department	9
Schwob School of Music	27	Policy, Justice & Public Safety	14
Theatre Department	31	Earth and Space Science	21
Turner College	17%	English Department	11
Accounting & Finance	9	History & Geography Dept.	7
Marketing & Management	22	Mathematics Department	7
Computer Science	22	Society, Culture & Languages	4
College of Education & Health Professions	12%	Psychology Department	17
Kinesiology & Health Sciences	28		
School of Nursing	4	Dual Enrollment/Other	8
Teacher Education Department	6	Interdisciplinary Studies	4
		Grand Total	308

22% Pursuing Minors

11% Double Majors

In addition to their first declared majors, which are listed above, 11% are pursuing a second major, and 22% are pursuing minors.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND HONORS COLLEGE ADVANCEMENT

The Honors College would not be successful without the financial investment of our community, the Laureate Society, and our Honors Advisory Board. The majority of the funds raised go directly to students through tuition scholarships and grants, with funds supporting educational activities such as study abroad and conference travel. Last year, we provided \$207,529 in direct student support with our spending per student decreasing from \$795 to 674 per student primarily due to enrollment growth and fewer accessing their tower study abroad funding.

Incoming First Year Scholarships: Funded by sixteen restricted endowments and the state scholarship fund listed in Appendix D, the Honors College awards students with Presidential (4 year, \$5,000 per year), Tower (4 year, \$2,500 per year), University (4 year, \$1,000 first year, convertible to \$2,500 in subsequent years), and one-time scholarships.

Incoming Freshmen Study Abroad Grants: Those who earn a Presidential and Tower scholarship may use up to \$3,200 for one study abroad experience once they reach their junior year.

Undergraduate Scholarships: Students reaching their junior year may apply for an Honors Undergraduate Scholarship (up to 2 years, up to \$2,500 per year).

Honors Educational Activity Grants: Students can apply for these funds to compete in regional and national conferences, support international internships and study abroad, or offset the costs for research.

Meritorious Students with Need Scholarships: The Richards Foundation annual gift began in Fall 2019 and supports students in the Honors College who are experiencing financial hardships. The Honors College, working with the CSU Office of Financial Aid, identifies students who fall between the gaps of federally defined financial need and require support to complete their education.

FY 2024-25 Scholarship & Grant Expenditures		
	First Year	Undergraduate
Presidential Scholarship	\$12,500	
Tower Scholarship	\$97,650	
University Scholarship	\$25,750	
Tower Study Abroad*	\$20,979	
Meritorious Students with Need Awards		\$22,900
Undergraduates Two-Year Awards		\$15,000
Honor Education Activity Grants		\$6,150
One-Time Awards	\$5,500	
First Generation Student Awards		\$1,100
	\$162,379	\$45,150
Total	\$207,529	

Investing in the Honors College

The Laureate Society is the driving force behind the mission of the Honors College. The Latin root of the word “laureate” is from the historic mark of distinction, “crowned with laurels,” a befitting title for a society dedicated to honors education. Contributors play a major role in providing scholarship support as well as educational and experiential programs. Members of the Honors College Advisory Board are listed on page 30 and denoted by “*”.

THE LAUREATE SOCIETY

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Allen	Ms. Rachel Lambert
Mrs. Peggy Batastini	Dr. Kayron Laska & Mr. John Laska
Mr. Josue Becerra	Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Lewack
Dr. & Mrs. James Buntin	Dr. & Mrs. David Lewis*
Ms. Sharron Caldwell	Dr. Ryan Lynch & Mrs. Jacqueline Lynch
Ms. Verna Campos	Mrs. Hildagine Manio
Mr. Robert Anness & Mrs. Katarine Cannella	Mr. & Mrs. Earnest Victor McGregor
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Cardin	Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Money
Mr. & Mrs. Turner Carlise	Mr. & Mrs. Frank Moody
Ms. Stephanie Carney	Ms. Abby Moore
Mr. & Mrs. James Cawthorne	Dr. & Mrs. Vincent Naman*
Mrs. Kelly Cooper	Dr. And Mrs. Eddie Obleton*
Mr. Kenneth Couture, Sr.	Mr. Donald Osborne
Ms. Joan Cramer	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Patton
Mrs. Diane Dana	Mr. & Mrs. David Phillips
Ms. Beverly Mack Davis	Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Ragan
Ms. Jessica Demarco-Jacobson	Ms. Diamond Rashad
Ms. Ashlyn Dewberry	Dr. Stuart Rayfield & Mr. David Rayfield
Mrs. Susan Dolan	Mr. & Mrs. Donald Regan III
Dr. William Edwards	Mrs. Geraldine Reinier
Mr. and Mrs. James Feighner, Jr.	Mr. Richard Rodgers
Dr. & Mrs. R. Clark Gillett, Jr.	Ms. Jazmin Rush
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Green	Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Sabau
Mrs. Richard Hallock	Mr. & Mrs. Frank Schley
Ms. Amy Hamilton	Mr. & Mrs. Todd Schuster
Dr. & Mrs. Ed Helton*	Mr. Harrison Sharitt
Mr. John Hargrove	Mr. & Mrs. John Shinkle
Mr. & Mrs. Howell Hollis III	Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Siddall
Mr. Paul Holmer Monte*	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Howard	Dr. & Mrs. Eric Spears
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Howard	Ms. Patty Kimbrough Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. Edgar Hughston	Ms. Maryah Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Jenkins	Mr. Lealava'a Tuiolosega
Mr. & Mrs. Edwin C. Johns, Jr.	Mr. Michael Tullier
Dr. & Mrs. Alonzo Jones, Sr.	Mr. & Mrs. Richard Ussery
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Richard Joyner	Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Van Allen
Mr. & Mrs. Kelsey Kennon*	Mr. Ferrell Weatherman
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Key III	Mr. & Mrs. Torrey Wiley*

Mr. Tyler Krug	Mr. & Mrs. James Yancey
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INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Since July 2023, the Honors College has housed the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies (BSIS), a unique academic program that not only gives honors students the opportunity to design their majors, but it also serves all students who are eager to complete their degrees. The curriculum is flexible and allows students to design their major by choosing from two disciplinary pathways. From summer 2024 to spring 2025, 41 students graduated from the BSIS and it continues to show robust enrollment with 147 pursuing their degree.

Interdisciplinary Pathways



Students design their pathways and articulate the value of their degree program in three foundational courses. Each course is one-credit hour, with the first course devoted to selecting courses that directly meet the student's professional and personal goals. The second course develops critical thinking skills essential for any academic degree, while the final course bolsters the value of interdisciplinary studies through the exploration of cross-disciplinary research and careers. After students complete their self-designed pathways, they plan and execute a senior project that leverages what they learned in their pathways and connects their major to their career goals. To ensure quality and coherence of student pathways and curriculum, faculty from across campus have joined our Interdisciplinary Studies Governing Board, which provides oversight and feedback on the program. The full program and Governing Board members are listed in Appendix E.

HONORS COLLEGE STAFF & FACULTY



Dr. Cindy Ticknor, Dean

Dr. Ticknor was appointed as the inaugural dean of the Honors College in 2014 after working with honors education for four years. She is a Professor of Mathematics Education and has been a leader in Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics (STEM) Education. Since arriving at CSU in 2003, she has received over \$2.5 million in grants to support STEM initiatives and has served as the Associate Dean of the College of Science. She holds degrees from the University of Maryland *summa cum laude*, Columbus State University, and Auburn University.



Dr. Ryan J. Lynch, Associate Dean of Honors and Interdisciplinary Studies

Dr. Ryan Lynch served as the inaugural Honors Faculty Fellow and has taught many honors courses, including Understanding Non-Western Cultures, Historical Problem Solving, and a course on the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks. Arriving at CSU in 2016, he holds graduate degrees from the University of Oxford and the University of St Andrews. Dr. Lynch is an Associate Professor of History in the Department of History and Geography and is a specialist of Islamic and Middle Eastern history.



Dr. Dawn Frazier, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Research

Dr. Andrea Dawn Frazier is a Professor in Teacher Education and Leadership. She completed her doctorate in educational psychology from Ball State University in 2009. Before attending Ball State, she worked at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, a residential school for students gifted/talented in math, science, and technology. Her research interests encompass the educative experience of underrepresented students in STEM and honors education.



Ms. Jasmine Reid, Advisor

Ms. Jasmine Reid has worked in higher education since 2015 and has been with Columbus State since 2009. During her time at Columbus State, she has gained experience in financial aid, and new student orientation, and university advancement. She graduated from Columbus State with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science in 2015 and completed the Master of Education Leadership degree on the Higher Education track at Columbus State in 2017.



Mrs. Kristi Rehrauer, Advisor

Mrs. Kristi Rehrauer has worked in higher education since 2006 and has been with the Columbus State Honors College since July 2019. Kristi joined us from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA. Kristi has a B.S. in Wildlife Biology from Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky and completed the Master of Education Leadership degree in the Higher Education Track at Columbus State University in 2022. She brings multiple years of higher education experience to the Honors College.

ADVISORY BOARDS & COMMITTEES

The Honors College is supported by a community advisory board and two committees of the Faculty Senate. CSU faculty from all departments have strongly endorsed and support the Honors College. The CSU Faculty Senate committees are formal organizational structures that provide oversight of the curriculum and scholarship awarding processes as well as advocacy for improving the national recognition of the institution.

Honors Advisory Board

Established in the Fall of 2015, the Advisory Board of the Honors College aims to support the mission of both CSU and the Honors College by providing valued counsel on innovative strategies that connect the Honors College with the community. The responsibilities of board members include:

- Educating our local community about the Honors College's programming, goals, and achievements,
- Supporting activities related to the recruitment and selection of scholars,
- Promoting academic and co-curricular educational opportunities that develop the institution's regional, state, national, and international recognition for academic excellence,
- Identifying emerging issues and trends that may impact the Honors College,
- Providing guidance and advice with regard to our fundraising program, and
- Assisting in the cultivation of potential board members while promoting a climate for support for educational excellence.

The Honors College is pleased that the following members served during 2024-25.

Ms. Kathy Jones, Chair
Mrs. Linda Shinkle, Chair elect
Dr. David Lewis
Dr. Ed Helton
Dr. Shikha Shah
Mr. Bob May

Mrs. Anne Gay
Dr. Eddie Obleton
Mr. Paul Holmer-Monte
Dr. Cindy Ticknor (ex officio)
Dr. Andrea Frazier (ex officio)
Dr. Ryan Lynch (ex officio)

Honors Education Committee

As a committee of the CSU Faculty Senate, the Honors Education Committee oversees and supports scholarship competitions and the curriculum of the Honors College. This year, as requested by the Faculty Senate, we reduced our membership to one faculty for each college and the library with one member at large. Due to a faculty on educational leave, Dr. Ticknor served as acting chair.

Dr. Cindy Ticknor (ex officio, non-voting acting chair)
Dr. Susan Tomkiewicz, (member at-large)
Dr. Joshua May, COA
Dr. Chandler Padgett, COEHP
Dr. Mahmut Reyhanoglu, COLS

Dr. Ed O'Donnell, TCOB
Ms. Nancy Shore, Library
Dr. Andrea Dawn Frazier (ex officio)
Dr. Ryan Lynch (ex officio)
Mr. Jarrett Huckaby, Student & Honors Faculty Fellows

National Scholarship & Awards Committee

Another committee of the CSU Faculty Senate, the National Scholarship and Awards Committee, is responsible for:

- Publicizing all national scholarships, fellowships and academic awards competitions to eligible students,
- Administering internal competitions to identify student candidates for at-large national competitions, and
- Mentoring students as they prepare applications for national recognition.

The membership for 2024-25 was:

Dr. Joshua May Co-Chair, COA
Dr. Andrea Dawn Frazier Co-chair, COEHP
Dr. Guihong Fan, COLS
Dr. Steve Jessup, COLS
Dr. Kerri Taylor, COLS

Dr. Yi Zhou, TCOB
Dr. When Shi, TCOB
Ms. Laura Pate, Servant Leadership
Dr. Ryan Lynch (ex officio)
Dr. Eric Spears (ex officio)

APPENDICES 2024-25

Appendix A: Honors Learning Outcomes & Curricular Requirements

Learning Outcomes

When a student graduates from the Honors College, they know how to:

- ❖ Identify resources and evaluate evidence used to support arguments or critiques in multiple academic disciplines.
- ❖ Analyze the commonalities and discords of the multiple perspectives.
- ❖ Demonstrate cultural awareness and view issues from a global perspective.
- ❖ Design independent inquiry projects that require critical and creative thinking.
- ❖ Demonstrate effective research or performance skills in their academic discipline.
- ❖ Effectively communicate scholarly work within their discipline and the broader community.
- ❖ Connect their academic experience with local community experiences.
- ❖ Demonstrate that they are prepared for a career in their chosen field.

Honors Curricular Requirements

Students must graduate with cum laude honors (3.4 GPA) or better and complete the following to earn the Honors Seal*:

- Complete our **First Year Seminar: ITDS 1779H Scholarship Across the Disciplines**
- Earn a total of 30 Honors Points by submitting work in each of the following areas:
 - Personal Enrichment – 10 points required
 - Academic Enhancement – 10 points required
 - Research & Independent Inquiry – 10 points required
- Complete **HONS 3555 Great Conversations** (3 credit hours)
- Complete an **Honors Senior Project Sequence** (3 credit hours) that includes a formal defense of the project to a committee of faculty members.

Students earn points that demonstrate mastery of all the learning outcomes and are equivalent to 26 credit hours of honor educational requirements.

The Point System – How to Earn the Honors Seal

The point system includes many of the elements of our previous credit-hour based curriculum, but includes the following improvements:

- Incentivizes scholarly publications, dissemination of work, and applications for national recognitions.
- Incorporates honors level internships, practicums, and other field experiences through problem solving.
- Prioritizes cultural awareness and developing global perspectives.
- Improves the alignment of requirements with learning outcomes. This not only benefits program assessments, but also enables students to effectively communicate the skills and richness of their honors experience to future employers and graduate schools.
- Adds flexibility for transfer students and undergraduates who never had the opportunity to participate in honors education before joining the university.
- Moves community engagement requirements from our honors society (Honoris Causa) into the curriculum.

Students will still complete three mandatory requirements: Our introductory seminar (ITDS 1779H), our capstone for interdisciplinary studies (HONS 3555: Great Conversations), and a senior project. They will also earn points in three areas:

BETTER: Personal Enrichment	BROADER: Academic Enhancement	DEEPER: Research & Inquiry
Leadership Community Service Career Preparation Enrichment Seminars National Recognitions	Honors Courses International Education Minors & Certificates Academic Seminars Honors Study Trips	Honors Contracts Independent Studies Field Based Problem-Solving Publications Presentations & Performances Scholarship

Research & Inquiry: Students are challenged to go DEEPER into their major through honors contract work, publishing, and professional presentations. By the time they graduate, they will have demonstrated that they can work effectively on an independent project requiring critical thinking.

Academic Enhancement: Students make their academic experience BROADER by taking honors core courses, studying abroad, and double majoring or adding minors. By the time

Annual Report 2024-25

they graduate, students will be able to understand alternative viewpoints, appreciate other cultures, and think outside the box.

Personal Enrichment: Students become BETTER at leading organizations, engaging in the community, and applying for national awards. Graduates will be prepared to succeed in professional settings, work with teams, and give back to their community.

HONORS MODULE: PERSONAL ENRICHMENT

Required Points in this Category: 10 Honors Points

Required Capstone: Submission of a Curriculum Vita

In this area, honors students earn points for becoming engaged members of our campus and local community as they prepare for professional and academic careers. Community service and engagement allows students to work with others from diverse backgrounds to achieve a common goal, to develop leadership skills and manage projects, and to prepare for a career in their chosen field.

By completing this area, honors students will:

- Connect their academic experience with local community experiences.
- Demonstrate that they are prepared for a career in their chosen field.

Earning Points in Personal Enrichment

Honors students may earn up to 10 honors points in the area of Personal Enrichment through any of the following activities (in general, one point is awarded for 15 contact hours).

Leadership Development (0-4 points)

The Honors College encourages students to develop their leadership skills through many campus programs and activities. Students may earn points by completing leadership workshops or earning leadership certificates, with points awarded based on the contact hours required. In addition, students that support substantial activities of any campus or community organization may earn up to 2 points for each leadership position held.

Community Engagement (0-4 points)

Students may earn 1 point for every 15 hours of community service documented in CSU Involve, ½ of a point for participating in Honors Day of Services, and 1 point for each year of active engagement in Honoris Causa.

Career Readiness (0-4 points)

Honors students are strongly encouraged to engage in activities that prepare them for careers and graduate studies. Points may be earned by completing 15 hours of job shadowing to explore career options (1 point), completing internships (1-3 points), completing “soft skills” or “life skills” workshops, or completing test preparation programs for graduate entrance exams (GRE, MCAT, LSAT, etc.).

National Awards & Recognitions (0-2 points)

Honors students should apply for Rhodes, Truman, Goldwater, Phi Kappa Phi, and many other national scholarships, fellowships and recognitions. These applications are intensive, and an excellent opportunity to reflect on accomplishments, goals, and aspirations.

Honors 3020 Personal Enrichment (0-4)

Regularly, HONS 3020 courses will focus on personal enrichment. Course topics will include personal finance, leadership training, risk-taking, grant writing, and meditation. Each course earns 1 point.

HONS 3025 Service Learning (0-2 points)

Students may enroll in HONS 3025 and independently design a project with a community partner that provides a deeper, real-world application of their knowledge or skills in their field. Satisfactory completion of HONS 3025 earns 2 points in the area of *Personal Enrichment*, if not applied to the area of *Research and Inquiry*.

HONORS MODULE: ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT

Required Points in this Category: 10 Honors Points

Required Capstone: HONS 3555 Great Conversations

Honors students should amass experiences that broaden their knowledge of the world to complement the in-depth study of their chosen field. By enhancing academics with diverse, multidisciplinary educational experiences, students become more adaptable to new situations, more creative in problem-solving approaches, and multiculturally sensitive in their interactions. All of these attributes are highly valued by employers and graduate programs.

In this module, students earn points for participating in experiences that broaden and enhance traditional academic majors. In addition, students complete HONS 3555 Great Conversations, a course designed to challenge students to consider a topic from multiple disciplinary lenses.

By completing this module, honors students will:

- Identify resources and evaluate evidence used to support arguments or critiques in multiple academic disciplines.
- Analyze the commonalities and discords of the multiple perspectives.
- Demonstrate cultural awareness and view issues from a global perspective.

Earning Points in Academic Enhancement

Honors students may earn up to 10 honors points in the area of Academic Enhancement.

Honors Core Courses (3-8 points)

Core coursework in the Honors College is designed to invite students to view the world from the disciplinary perspective of their professor or challenge students to view the world from multiple disciplinary perspectives. Students earn one honors point for each credit hour completed with a grade of B or better. Students must complete at least one, three credit hour core course.

International Education (2-7 points)

Global education is a critical component of the Honors College since graduates must demonstrate the ability to work effectively cross-culturally. A minimum of two honors points must be earned in cultural competence (International students are exempt from this requirement). Points may be earned by:

- Earning course credit in a study abroad program (3 points)

- Completing a visiting student (semester long) study abroad program (4 points)
- Completing courses in the International Learning Community (2 points per course)
- HONS 3010 Global Perspectives Seminar (1 point per course)
- Other substantial projects that enhance cultural competence (points will vary)

Double Majors, Minors, Certificates & Programs (0-5 points)

Many students add diversity to their academic programs by completing a double major, adding a minor, or completing a certificate program, which also adds honors points. Possible ways to earn points include:

- Earning a second major (3 points)
- Earning a minor (2 points)
- Earning an undergraduate certificate (e.g. Medieval & Renaissance Studies, GIS, Jazz Studies, etc.) (2 points)
- Completing the Servant Leadership Program (2 points)

HONS 3000: Academic Enhancement Seminars (0-5)

Students may earn additional points by taking HONS 3000 Seminars. The courses are designed to interconnect disciplines and enrich the collegiate experience through cultural, historical, and social perspectives. HONS 3000 are zero-credit hours and require 12-15 contact hours. Topics vary each term and extend beyond standard university offerings. Some of the past topics include: World Religions, Comparative Media, Photography, Varieties of Protestantism, Gardens of Georgia, and Historical Venues. HONS 3000 courses are open to all levels of students, including freshmen and sophomores, and are graded S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory). Students may only enroll in up to two HONS 3000 courses in one semester. Students earn 1 point per HONS 3000 seminar.

Other Academically Enhanced Courses (0-5)

Students may apply for points when they participate in unique credit hour generating experiences that broaden perspectives or enhance academics. Points are awarded based upon credit hours generated. Some examples of these experiences include:

- HONS 3500 Honors Study Trips (3 points per course)
Students travel away from campus to study a topic. Topics might include Civil War Battlefields and Burial Grounds, Antebellum Southern Architecture, Music of the South (Memphis, Nashville, New Orleans), Historic Air and Naval Sites of the Southeast, Caverns of Appalachia, a week on Broadway, etc.
- Extended field-based courses outside of the local region (3 points per course)

Faculty have led 3-6 week programs studying the geology of sites such as Yellowstone and the Appalachian Mountains, or arts in New York City

- HONS 3555 (If repeated for credit)

HONS 3555 Great Conversations

This cross-disciplinary seminar examines a selected topic from at least two disciplinary lenses. Topics may include current or global issues or significant historical questions that are examined in the context of divergent disciplines. Courses may be repeated for credit with different topics.

HONORS MODULE: RESEARCH & INDEPENDENT INQUIRY

Required Points in this Category: 10 Honors Points

Required Capstone: Honors Senior Project Course Sequence

Honors students should strive to develop the skills and competencies needed to complete independent projects in their discipline. The ability to work independently on extended projects, to analytically and creatively solve problems, and to communicate effectively, are all top skills employers and graduate schools seek. In this area, students earn points for participating in experiences that enhance those valued skills and complete a culminating senior project that documents the learning outcomes listed below.

By completing this module, honors students will:

- Identify resources and evaluate evidence used to support arguments or critiques in their academic discipline.
- Design independent inquiry projects that require critical and creative thinking.
- Demonstrate effective research or performance skills in their academic discipline.
- Effectively communicate scholarly work within their discipline and the broader community.

Earning points in Research & Independent Inquiry

Honors students may earn up to 10 honors points in the area of Research and Independent Inquiry by completing activities or experiences that will prepare them for completing an honors level senior project. Honors Points may be earned in the following ways:

Contracts: Faculty Directed Projects (3-9 points)

Each completed honors contract is worth three points, and all students must complete at least one honors contract to complete this area of Research & Independent Inquiry. Honors contracts are proposed by students in any upper-division course (3000 level or above) and

completed under the direction of a faculty member. All honors contracts should enrich the quality of a student's educational experience in their course rather than simply increasing their workload.

Field-Based Problem Solving (0-6)

Students who are participating in practicums, internships, and other field related experiences may propose projects that evolve from direct observation of real-world problems or issues. The projects are similar in scope to honors contracts, but since they are grounded on observations made during the field work, they cannot be constrained by the timeline of traditional honors contract proposals. All projects must include a scholarly review of best practices and approaches to solving the problem and dissemination of the work. Examples may include identifying new approaches to teaching a concept to an inclusive classroom, developing new applets for a small business, or researching best practices for wound care. Each project is completed under the direction of a faculty member and may earn up to three points.

Independent Study (0-4 points)

Students may earn up to four points by taking an independent study in their major. The course must earn at least 3 semester credit hours.

HONS 3025 Service Learning (0-2 points)

Students may enroll in HONS 3025 and independently design a project with a community partner that provides a deeper, real-world application of their knowledge or skills in their field. Satisfactory completion of HONS 3025 earns 2 points in the area of Research and Inquiry if not applied to the area of Personal Enrichment.

Publications (0-5 points)

Publishing research or creative works is highly valued and encouraged in the Honors College and will earn points based upon the quality of the publishing venue and contribution of the author or artist. *Note that self-publishing does not qualify for points.*

Examples of points awarded:

- A student who is the first author of an article or creative endeavor that appears in a peer reviewed or edited publication may earn 3 points per publication.
- A student who is a contributing author of an article or creative endeavor that appears in a peer reviewed or edited publication may earn 2 points per publication.

Regional Presentations & Performances (0-5)

Students who are invited to present or perform at regional events may earn honors points. Regional events are any event that draws participants from outside our local community,

Annual Report 2024-25

including state, southeastern, national, or international conferences and competitions. The events may be conferences, competitions, or other events designed for the scholarly exchange of professional work.

Examples of points awarded:

- Award winning presentations or performances may earn 3 points
- Presenting or performing may earn 2 points
- Attendance at a conference or workshop may earn 1 point

Appendix B: Honors College Admission Criteria

Entering Freshmen

High school students who are applying for admission to Columbus State University are encouraged to apply for admission to the Honors College if they have any of the following:

- Earned a combined score of 1200 or higher on the SAT Math & SAT Verbal score, with a 550 minimum on both the math and verbal subsections, or an ACT composite score of 26
- Achieved a cumulative high school GPA of 3.50 or higher, based on high school academic courses only
- Ranked in the top 10% of their class

CSU & Transfer Student Admissions

In order to qualify for admissions, current CSU students or students transferring to CSU must meet the following criteria for admissions to the Honors College:

- Earned a cumulative GPA of 3.40 or higher (calculated by academic courses only)
- Completed a minimum of 15 semester hours earned that are applicable to a degree program*
- Recommended by a university faculty member

*Students previously enrolled in developmental courses may enter the Honors College if they have COMPASS scores of 95 in reading, 97 in writing, and 48 in math and are no longer enrolled in developmental courses. Students enrolled in developmental courses or in courses to remediate CPC (College Preparatory Curriculum) deficiencies may not enter the CSU Honors College. The Honors College may consider exceptions to the admission criteria in certain cases with permission of the Dean.

Admissions requirements for dual enrollment:

Combined SAT Math and Critical Reading score of at least 1100 with a minimum of 500 on each subsection or an ACT composite score of 24, and high school academic GPA of 3.50 or higher.

Appendix C: Honors Scholarships Policies & Procedures

Entering First-Year Scholarships

Honors Scholarships for entering first-year students are competitively awarded each year to students who meet the minimum CSU Honors College admission requirements. The merit-based scholarship competition includes a formal application and an on-campus interview. Funds may be used in addition to other financial aid, including Georgia's HOPE scholarship program. First-year students are eligible for either the \$5,000 Presidential Scholarship or \$2,500 Tower Scholarships. Both are annual, renewable scholarships and may be renewed for up to four years if students are active participants in the CSU Honors College. In addition, students receiving the scholarships are awarded a one-time study abroad scholarship of up to \$3,200 that may be used when the scholar reaches their junior year.

Undergraduate Scholarships

Honors College Scholarships for Undergraduates are also competitively awarded to active Honors College students for tuition and academic pursuits during their junior and senior year. Scholarships may be up to \$1,250 per semester and may be renewed for four semesters. Full eligibility requirements and criteria are included on the application.

Committee Recommended Schedules:

Presidential Scholarship Competition, with one Presidential Scholarship of \$5,000 awarded:

- ▶ Application Due Date: November 1
- ▶ Notify Interviewees: November 6
- ▶ Interview Day: November 17
- ▶ Award Letters Mailed: December 1 (All others will be waitlisted).
- ▶ Acceptance Required by: May 1

Tower Competition:

- ▶ Application Due Date: February 1
- ▶ Notify Interviewees: February 6
- ▶ Interview Day: February 23
- ▶ Award Letters Mailed: March 8
- ▶ Acceptance Required by: May 1

Undergraduate Competition:

- ▶ Application Due Date: April 15
- ▶ Award Letters Mailed: May 1, but may include a waiting list. Funding will occur after final acceptances received by Entering Freshmen.

Appendix D: Scholarship & Grant Sources

In 2024-25, high achieving students in the Honors College received \$226,600 in scholarships and grants. The following endowments, restricted funds, annual restricted gifts, and state scholarship allocations provide funding for scholarships each year.

Community Scholarship
Frank Brown Scholarship
Gerald & Linnie Coady Scholarship
Greentree Scholarship
Bruce & June Howard Scholarship
Hollis Leadership Scholarship
James & Gladys Smith Scholarship
James W. Hunter Scholarship
John & Judith Satlof Scholarship

Leo & Florence Brooks Scholarship
Walter E. Haywood Scholarship
William Fort Scholarship
John & Betty Ruth Rogers Endowment for
Excellence
Richards Needs-Based Scholarship^{*A}
T. Hiram Stanley Scholarship^{*S}
T. Whitley Scholarship^{*S}
Merit Scholarship^{*S}

^{*A} Annual Giving

^{*S} State funded scholarships

The funds above, along with annual operating funds, are used for direct student support, which includes tuition scholarships, study abroad stipends, and honors educational activities grants. Direct student support shrank this year from \$226,6000 in 2023-24 to \$207,529 in 2024-25, with only \$20,979 expended for study abroad stipends.

Appendix E: Interdisciplinary Studies Curriculum

IMPACTS Core (General Education): **45 credit hours**

Major Requirements **78 credit hours**

Field of Study: 18 hours

ITDS 2791 Interdisciplinary Pathways 1 credit hour

ITDS 2792 Information Literacy and Critical Analysis 1 credit hour

ITDS 2793 Interdisciplinary Research and Careers 1 credit hour

Guided Electives 15 credit hours

Required for Major: 39 credit hours

ITDS 4901 Interdisciplinary Capstone Proposal 1 credit hour

ITDS 4902 Interdisciplinary Capstone 2 credit hours

Pathways 36 credit hours

Students select two distinctly different Pathway Areas from the following list for a total of 36 credit hours. At least 12 hours in each Pathway must be at the 3000 level or above.

General Electives: 21 credit hours

Students elect 21 credit hours of coursework. Students may need to apply upper level credit in this area to meet the program's overall requirement of 39 credits at the 3000-level or above. All students must complete 31 hours at CSU to meet the 25% residency requirement.

Total Requirements **123 credit hours**

Interdisciplinary Studies Governing Board. Since every student designs their degree plan, an interdisciplinary group of faculty members must provide oversight and feedback on the program quality and coherence. This year, we recruited a diverse group of faculty to serve on a governing board to support our new program.

Dr. Ryan Lynch, Chair

Dr. Wen Shi, Accounting & Finance

Dr. Ensaf Taha, Biology

Ms. Nancy Shore, Libraries

Dr. David Hahn, Music

Dr. Lydia Ray, Computer Science

Dr. Natalia Temesgen, English
Dr. Adam Bova, Communication
Dr. Natasha Hourel, Health Sciences
Dr. Tugce Gul, Teacher Education, Leadership& Counseling

Appendix F: Honors Faculty Fellows Program

Endorsed by the Dean's Council on 3/7/2018

Rationale

The Honors Faculty Fellows program provides cohorts of trained faculty who act as ambassadors for the Honors College while creating a sustainable strategy that supports the team-taught course, *HONS 3555: Great Conversations*. The goals of the program are to provide comprehensive honors faculty development that aligns with the university's strategic plan for academic excellence and to improve continuity for honors curriculum delivery.

Policies

- Eligibility: Tenure or tenure-track faculty in the tenure-granting college who are responsible for teaching at least one class in the core curriculum per term or are recommended by their Chairs and Dean.
- Length of Term: Appointed for a two-year term. Terms are renewable, but full applications must be submitted through the competitive selection process. Under special circumstances, such as unanticipated withdrawals from the program, terms may be extended with the approval of the deans of the Honors College and the faculty's tenure granting college.
- Number of Participants: Four per term.
- Workload: Participants will have the equivalent of a traditional 3 credit hour workload per semester in Honors College that count toward their total workload expectations in their academic department. Since participants are expected to be dedicated to improving their teaching and mentoring practices during the program, if faculty assume any workload assignments as overloads, they may be asked to withdraw from the Honors Faculty Fellows program.
- Honorarium: For participating in faculty development meetings and workshops during the program, faculty will receive \$500 per semester total of \$1000 per year. Participants would be eligible to apply for other university professional development grants.
- Recognition: Earn the title of "Honors College Faculty Fellow" upon entering the program and a certificate at the completion of the two-year term.

Honors College Workload and Expectations

Participants will be expected to participate in one workshop prior to the beginning of the program and biweekly professional development activities that build an honors learning community. All meetings will be open to all faculty teaching in honors but required only of the faculty fellows. Meetings will be coordinated with the Faculty Center. The purpose of the professional development will be to:

- Align curriculum and assessment to the Honors College programmatic learning outcomes
- Encourage the use of active learning strategies, including problem-based learning
- Review literature regarding honors education
- Share strategies and resources that support honors student development
- Provide opportunities to coordinate scholarly activities pertaining to honors education

In addition to participating in professional development activities, participants will provide an annual lecture pertaining to honors education to the campus.

Since the goal of the Honors College Fellows Program is to provide more comprehensive honors faculty development, participants will also rotate through instructional responsibilities that include:

- Teaching honors core courses (e.g. ENGL 1102H)
- Developing and instructing honors enrichment seminars (e.g. HONS 3000)
- Team-teaching HONS 3555: Great Conversations
- Mentoring honors thesis proposal in HONS 4901
- Mentoring one senior project per term in HONS 4902

Instructional Rotation & Load Calculation (credit hour equivalents noted):

Fall Semester Year 1

Faculty A1: HONS 3555 (1.5) + HONS Enrichment** (1)

Faculty A2: HONS 3555 (1.5) + HONS 4901 (1)

Faculty B1: Honors Core* (3)

Faculty B2: Honors Core* (3)

Spring Semester Year 1

Faculty B1: HONS 3555 (1.5) + HONS 4901 (1)

Faculty B2: HONS 3555 (1.5) + HONS Enrichment (1)

Faculty A1: Honors Core* (3)

Faculty A2: Honors Core* (3)

Fall Semester Year 2

Faculty A2: HONS 3555 (1.5) + HONS Enrichment (1)

Faculty B2: HONS 3555 (1.5) + HONS 4901 (1)

Faculty A1: Honors Core* (3)

Faculty B1: Honors Core* (3)

Spring Semester Year 2

Faculty A1: HONS 3555 (1.5) + HONS 4901 (1)

Faculty B1: HONS 3555 (1.5) + HONS Enrichment (1)

Faculty A2: Honors Core* (3)

Faculty B2: Honors Core* (3)

*Honors Core sections are dedicated honors sections that are not cross listed with non-honors courses and are capped at 18 students. Study abroad sections are excluded.

** Honors enrichment sections are zero-credit hour requirements but require 15 contact hours per term and are equivalent to 1-credit hour workload.

