

# WILLIAM CONROY HONORS COLLEGE (UNDERGRADUATE)

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## Mission of the William Conroy Honors College

The mission of the New Mexico State University Honors College is to serve the citizens and state of New Mexico by providing an enriching environment for diverse, academically talented, and motivated students. The Honors College also seeks to create a community of scholars and mentors that fosters personal growth, critical thinking, leadership, independence, curiosity, and social responsibility. The college aspires to cultivate student potential to broadly understand and positively impact communities, organizations, and the larger world. The Honors College aims to focus campus attention on excellence in undergraduate education while strengthening the university's reputation as the university of choice in New Mexico.

In support of this mission, the Honors College integrates the following objectives:

- Provide students with an interdisciplinary, intellectually challenging curriculum that integrates active learning;
- Promote university-wide undergraduate research and experiential opportunities, linking students with faculty mentors;
- Encourage, mentor and guide students seeking postgraduate scholarships and fellowships;
- Offer students opportunities for developing leadership skills;
- Create a residential community that combines learning inside and outside the classroom.

In small classes taught by master teachers, students in the Honors College engage in lively discussion and collaborative investigation of interdisciplinary topics. By taking honors courses, students may also work toward completing general education requirements and disciplinary requirements in the major.

Students in the Honors College are 'dual citizens', meaning they enroll in both the college(s) of their major/minor and the Honors College. The Honors College does not offer a degree instead, it offers students the opportunity to graduate with various levels of honors distinction (described below).

## Admission to the Honors College

Students admitted to the Honors College are designated as Crimson Scholars, the following eligibility criteria apply:

**Automatic Eligibility.** Entering freshmen are automatically eligible for admission to the Honors College and Crimson Scholars by meeting one of the following criteria:

- composite ACT score of 26 (or 1240 SAT score); or
- high school GPA of 3.75 or higher

**Admission by Petition.** Entering freshmen who have an ACT score of at least 24 (or 1200 SAT score) or a high school GPA of 3.50 may submit a written petition for provisional admission to the Honors College using a form provided by the Honors College office upon the request of the student.

**Transfer and Continuing Students.** Transfer and continuing students who have earned at least 3 college credit hours will be eligible for admission to the college on the basis of a cumulative college GPA that meets eligibility requirements for continuing students (see below).

**Eligibility for Continuing Membership.** The eligibility criteria for continuing membership in the Honors College is the same as for continuing Crimson Scholars status. The basic requirement is (more information is available in the Crimson Scholar Program section):

- Cumulative GPA of 3.50 at the end of most current semester

**Appeals.** Students who fall below the designated GPAs and lose their eligibility for Honors College status due to extraordinary circumstances may petition the Honors College Dean.

## Enrolling in Honors Courses

All Crimson Scholars may enroll in Honors courses. The eligibility requirements to enroll in lower-division honors courses are the same as those pertaining to admission to the college and continuance in the college. For upper-division courses, the requirement is a cumulative 3.5 GPA. Students lacking these requirements may petition the Honors College Dean for permission on a case-by-case basis.

## Graduating with University Honors

The Honors College offers two program options:

1. Graduating with University Honors Distinction or
2. The Honors Certificate

Each option has separate eligibility requirements, benefits and forms of recognition for the student. Almost all honors courses fulfill university general education and viewing a wider world requirements.

Any student who attains an overall GPA of 3.2-4.0 and who completes 6 credits of honors course work, with at least 3 credits at the 300 level or higher, is eligible to graduate with the Honors Certificate.

Any student who attains an overall GPA of 3.2-4.0 and who completes 15 credits of honors coursework, with at least 6 credits at the 300 level or

higher, and the honors capstone, is eligible to graduate with the University Honors Distinction. To have these courses count toward one of these programs, a student must earn at least a B. Students should plan to take 12-15 credits in official Honors College classes but may take up to 6 credits in Contract or Master's Accelerated Classes. Contract classes must be at the 300 level or higher and in a student's major (VWW courses do not count). The final 3 credits to graduate with the University Honors Distinction is in the form of an Internship Capstone course or a Research/Creative Activity Capstone course. Both options involve the completion and dissemination of a capstone project.

## University Honors Course Options

Honors credits may be earned through both HNRS and H designated courses. Regular Honors course options include Gen Ed, VWW, and Departmental Honors options. The Honors Program is designed to maximize student flexibility and also includes the opportunity to complete 6 credits of Honors Contracts or Master's Accelerated Program courses in the student's field of study. Honors credit may also be earned from education abroad and structured service experiences. Honors internship, directed research, and independent study options also ensure students can tailor their training to personal needs while building a resume of experience.

To complete the Honors Program, all students must propose and complete an Honors Capstone Project which includes an Honors Thesis (Research or Creative Project) or Internship Capstone. Students may petition to substitute a capstone project from their major field of study, in advance, with an additional Honors component of their work.

Detailed information on earning Honors credits and procedures for the Honors Capstone options can be found at the Honors College web pages: <https://honors.nmsu.edu/> (<http://honors.nmsu.edu>)

## Senior Capstone

The University is an academic community where new knowledge is created, the boundaries of creative expression are expanded, and standards for best professional practice are enhanced. In recognition of these important processes, all students that wish to graduate with the University Honors Distinction are required to participate in a capstone experience that features one of these activities:

**Thesis** — The thesis is an independent scholarly or scientific research project that is undertaken with the advice and direction of a member of the university faculty. The thesis does not need to be on a topic in the student's major field, but must meet the guidelines and protocols of the discipline in which it is written. The student's faculty advisor will review the student's thesis and determine a final grade. (HNRS 400 or approved substitution)

**Creative Arts or Performance Project** — The Senior Creative Arts/Performance project may take the form of an exhibition, written piece, performance, recital or other event deemed appropriate by the faculty advisor and the Dean of the Honors College. In addition to the performance or exhibition, the student must complete a written report, artist statement, or description of the project that is approved by the faculty advisor, to be filed with the Honors College. (HNRS 400 or approved substitution)

**Capstone Internship with Project** — The Honors Capstone Internship shall be undertaken under the auspices and supervision of an agency approved by the Dean of the Honors College and earn Honors internship credits. A NMSU advisor must approve the project and monitor its

progress. To qualify as an Honors Capstone, this work must be more than simply a certain number of hours in service to an agency. It must also involve an original project that meets a need for the agency or promotes the student's professional development beyond the hours of work documented. The results of this project should include some form of written report along with a presentation to the appropriate audience. A log and journal, including a reflective component, shall be kept and submitted by the student. (HNRS 410 or approved substitution)

The Capstone is normally completed during the senior year and may be undertaken only if the student meets the eligibility requirements for graduation from the College (3.5 minimum GPA and the required courses). The Capstone carries 3 graded credit hours.

- Before beginning the final project, the student must choose a faculty advisor and file with the College a proposal that is approved by the faculty advisor and the Dean of the Honors College. The final project is graded by the faculty advisor, who submits a final grade to the Dean of the Honors College.
- Candidates for graduation with University Honors Distinction are expected to make presentations of their final projects at one or more of the following:
  - The Undergraduate Research and Creative Arts Symposium held every Spring Semester,
  - Research and Creative Week presentation in the Fall term,
  - A department seminar,
  - A seminar sponsored by the Honors College,
  - A public reading or exhibition,
  - A meeting of the agency board of directors,
  - Or any other method of presentation deemed appropriate for the discipline and format of the project.
- The written component of the final project shall be filed with the Honors College.

Although most students will earn Honors Capstone Credit through HNRS (400, 410, 420), students may petition, in advance, to substitute capstone equivalent work from another department but are expected to meet the same standards for proposal, work submitted, and presentation as the Honors Capstone requirements.

The capstone options are designed to be flexible, however, they are not all inclusive. Students that wish to propose an alternate capstone strategy that meets the principles and goals of this work, are encouraged to meet with the Dean of the Honors College.

Updated proposal and application materials for Honors Capstone work is available on the Honors College website <https://honors.nmsu.edu/> (<http://honors.nmsu.edu>).

## Community Service Options

The Honors College encourages its students to perform volunteer public service. Under certain circumstances, public service may be used as an alternative to completing some of the requirements for graduation from the Honors College. The following guidelines apply:

During the sophomore, junior or senior year, a student with at least a 3.5 GPA may undertake community service with an agency or organization in Doña Ana County (or an agency outside the area approved by the Honors College Dean) to earn a waiver of up to 3 of the hours required for University Honors (not including the Final Project). A minimum of 15 hours of community service per week, per semester is required for

each honors credit hour to be waived. Community service hours must be verified by a supervisor of the agency or organization on a form approved by the Honors College. On-campus activities are not included under this option. The student must also certify that the community service hours are not being used for any course or degree requirement. Approval of the Dean of the Honors College must be obtained prior to beginning volunteer service to be eligible for this option.

## International Study Option

Students in the Honors College are strongly encouraged to participate in an international experience. An NMSU honors student with at least a 3.5 GPA may earn a waiver of up to 3 credit hours required for University Honors for such international study (not including the Capstone). This waiver will be awarded for college credit earned while participating in any international study program approved by the Honors College. One honors hour will be waived for each 3 semester credit hours earned with a grade of 'A', 'B', or 'S'. Permission to use this option must be approved in advance by the Honors College.

Note: Waiver of university honors credit for service learning or international study does not reduce or affect in any way the total number of hours required for graduation. Waiver of honors credit for service learning or international study cannot be applied toward the capstone requirement.

## Honors Certificate Program

Sophomores, juniors and seniors with a cumulative grade-point average of 3.2 are eligible for the Honors Certificate Program. A student who completes at least two 300- or 400-level honors seminars will be given a Certificate of Distinction at graduation and special recognition in the commencement program.

## Crimson Scholars Program

The Crimson Scholars Program is a benefits and recognition program for academically superior students who have a cumulative 3.5 GPA and are taking three or more credits per semester. Crimson Scholars receive a number of benefits, including:

- Automatic eligibility for all Honors courses
- Early registration
- Extended library check-out privileges
- Special advising
- The option to live in the Honors Living Learning Community in our residence hall.
- Students who earned at least 75% of their credits from New Mexico State University with Crimson Scholar status<sup>1</sup> at the time of graduation receive a "Crimson Scholar Graduate" notation on their transcript.
- Students who complete 75% of their credits as Crimson hours<sup>1</sup> from New Mexico State University at the time of applying for their degree, receive recognition in the commencement program and are eligible to purchase a Crimson Scholar cord for graduation.
- Students who have maintained Crimson Scholars status for 24 Crimson hours<sup>1</sup> from New Mexico State University earn a Crimson scholar pin.

To be eligible for the Crimson Scholars Program, applicants must be degree seeking.

- Entering freshmen must have either:
  - a minimum ACT standard composite score of 26;
  - a 3.75 or better high school GPA; *or*
  - a minimum SAT score of 1240; *or*
  - a 3.75 or better high school GPA
- Currently enrolled students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5 for 75% of the credits<sup>1</sup> at NMSU
- Transfer students must have a 3.5 cumulative GPA from their previous institution(s) or complete 3 or more credits<sup>1</sup> at NMSU for eligibility.

To maintain Crimson Scholar status:

- Freshmen entering on an ACT score must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 and complete three or more credits per semester to continue in the program.
- Sophomores, juniors and seniors must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5 and be currently enrolled in a total of 3 or more credits<sup>1</sup> per semester at NMSU or any NMSU community college to retain their Crimson Scholars status.
- Crimson Scholars whose GPA drops below the required cumulative 3.5 or drop below the three credit minimum will be dropped from the program. If in the following semester, the student's cumulative GPA and credits again meet the minimum requirement, the student will *automatically* be reinstated.

In recognition of the student's academic achievement, a statement designating "Crimson Scholar Graduate" is placed on the student's transcript after completion of 75% of credits earned at NMSU as Crimson hours<sup>1</sup> at the time of graduation and a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5. To be designated in the commencement program as a Crimson Scholar graduate, a student must complete a minimum 75% of credits earned at NMSU as Crimson hours<sup>1</sup> at the time of applying for their degree. Crimson Scholars receive recognition in the commencement program and are eligible to purchase a Crimson Scholar cord for graduation. Students who complete 24 Crimson hours<sup>1</sup> from New Mexico State University earn a Crimson Scholar pin. Crimson Scholars are entitled to early registration and library privileges. Additional information is available from the Crimson Scholars Office, located in the Conroy Honors Center.

*NOTE: Crimson Scholars interested in work-study positions must submit a yearly Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and complete a financial aid file with the NMSU Office of Financial Aid.*

<sup>1</sup> does not include I or audit course designations at NMSU

## The Honors Living and Learning Community (HLLC)

The New Mexico State University Honors Living and Learning Community (HLLC) is an educational initiative that links in-class and out-of-class learning experiences for honors students. The goals of the Honors Living and Learning Community are to:

1. supplement classroom learning experiences with co-curricular programming;
2. foster the development of an honors community that includes honors students, faculty, and staff; and
3. create a supportive environment for honors students.

Above all, the Honors Living and Learning Community aims to develop a small-college environment within the context of a large research university, thus giving students the benefits of both. Honors students, especially first-year students, are encouraged to take advantage of this special opportunity. The Honors Living and Learning Community is comprised of three components:

The Conroy Honors Center — is the academic home of the Honors College. This historic building was designed by the renowned southwestern architect Henry C. Trost and built in 1907 to house the campus chapter of the YMCA. The Conroy Center houses the administrative offices of the program along with three seminar rooms, a student commons area, a kitchen and a computer lab.

The Honors Residence Hall — is the focus of NMSU's vibrant honors community. It is a place where honors students live among a community of excellent students with outstanding academic records and who are interested in getting the most out of the academic opportunities offered to them at a large research institution. It also hosts many social and extracurricular academic activities.

The Honors Residence Hall is equipped with an electronic classroom, where some introductory honors courses may be taught. The honors faculty participate in residence hall programming and frequently attend residence hall floor meetings with students. The Honors Residence Hall is open to all First Year Crimson Scholars.

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