

## Congratulations on your admission to Honors at WCU!

**As a newly admitted Honors student, you may have some questions. We hope this FAQ will help!**

### **Question:** How is Honors life different from non-Honors life at WCU?

**Answer:** As an Honors student at WCU, you will find that you have the best of both worlds! While Honors students are fully integrated into the life of the University, you will also have special opportunities that are limited to honors, such as the option of honors housing. Honors students take *at least one* of their classes each semester with honors-designation; meaning they take the rest of their classes as regular courses. While there is no maximum in terms of how many courses you can take each semester with honors, it is typical for Honors students to take two courses (or six credit hours) with honors in a single semester.

### **Question:** What are the benefits of being an Honors student in the Brinson Honors College (BHC)?

**Answer:** There are many benefits to being an Honors student! These include (but are not limited to) priority registration, graduate student library privileges, eligibility to live in one of two Honors student residence halls, consideration for BHC-specific scholarships, and being a part of a large and diverse Honors student community on campus. Not to mention, you have an Honors Advisor who will work with you from orientation to graduation, helping you plan out your journey along the way and helping you with graduate or professional school planning.

### **Question:** Are there penalties if I drop Honors later or cannot complete the requirements by the time I graduate?

**Answer:** There are no penalties for students who wish to be removed from Brinson Honors College. However, students would lose any BHC-specific scholarships and would no longer be eligible to live in honors housing once they leave Honors.

### **Question:** If I'm hesitant about honors now, should I wait and join later?

**Answer:** Why wait? By starting your time at WCU as an Honors student, you gain access to all the benefits that BHC offers including being part of a terrific community of honors peers. This includes Honors advising and being enrolled in USI 101 Honors Forum your first semester. This class is guaranteed to get your college career started off the right way by learning about all the resources available to you as an Honors student and as a Catamount! Why not get a taste of Honors in your first semester? If you're uncertain, talk with some BHC students to discover why they chose the honors advantage.

### **Question:** How does the BHC differ from other honors programs or honors colleges at other universities?

**Answer:** The BHC was founded on strong student leadership. Because of this, BHC requirements are flexible rather than prescriptive. You choose your Honors Path at WCU – interested in study abroad? undergraduate research? leadership? community service? We work to create opportunities for Honors students, and you choose which ones fit your goals. While Honors students are required to take at least one course (three credit hours) with honors each semester until they fulfill 27 hours – you choose which classes and build them into your overall academic program. Our Honors student Board of Directors plays a large part in providing programming and setting policies for the BHC, and our Dean's Cabinet brings student leaders together to serve our entire honors community.

### **Question:** What are the requirements to graduate with full honors from Brinson Honors College?

**Answer:** There are only two requirements to graduate from Brinson Honors College – a cumulative WCU GPA of 3.5 or higher and completing 27 hours of honors credit hours that includes your first-semester Honors Forum course (1 credit). With most majors set at around 120 credit hours, your honors work will comprise about 23% of your total course work.

### **Question:** Do employers, graduate schools, and professional schools care about Honors?

**Answer:** They absolutely do! It's not enough in today's market to have the degree and the GPA alone; employers and graduate admissions are looking for you to demonstrate your capacity for creativity, problem solving, teamwork, and leadership. Your Honors Path is going to provide you with the opportunities to build those skills and demonstrate them. Graduates of the BHC go on to graduate and professional schools at a rate more than double the overall WCU average!

### **Question:** Is Honors limited to certain majors or programs?

**Answer:** No! Undergraduate students with any major (including Undeclared) are eligible to join BHC. While we do have more students from some majors than others, every major offered at WCU is now or has been recently represented in the BHC.

## Benefits of Being a Brinson Honors College Student

- Being part of a learning community of support that is facilitated by engaged membership.
- Smaller Honors courses taught by dedicated faculty that explore topics of interest in depth.
- Honors residence halls, Balsam and Blue Ridge – premium housing located in the heart of the main campus with A/C, private bathrooms, and an academically focused environment.
- Offices located in Balsam Hall, providing direct access to Brinson Honors College staff and advisors.
- Consideration for Brinson Honors College scholarships, including Study Abroad travel funding.
- Priority registration for classes each semester.
- Library privileges that are equivalent to those of graduate students.
- Brinson Honors College Student Board of Directors and other vital student leadership traditions.
- Recognition of outstanding academic achievement with the receipt of a Brinson Honors College medallion and diploma at graduation, upon successful completion of requirements.

## Honors College Life

Honors life at WCU gives you the flexibility to choose your path and maximize your experience. Students choose at least one course per semester (minimum) in which they earn honors credit toward graduation. Students can choose from one of many honors-only course sections or can work with a faculty member individually to earn honors credit through a contract, like an independent study. Living the Honors life at WCU provides the high achieving student with a built-in community without being exclusive. Honors students at WCU represent all majors across campus. Brinson Honors College values inclusive excellence and Honors students are active in all aspects of WCU life including POTM marching band, WCU athletics, student government, campus employment, and Greek life. Our tradition of strong student leadership gives Honors students exceptional opportunities that students can tailor to their own interests and goals.

## Why Honors at WCU? Some of Our Students say...

*"Being in the Honors College helped me meet new people and I love the community atmosphere."* - J.B.

*"It helps me stay on track to my goals."* - K.S.

*"I have more opportunities to meet with professors and get experience in things I'm most interested in."* - S.J.

## Academic Advising

Director of Honors Advising Emily Sharpe and Honors Advisor Colin Townsend advise Honors students who have not yet declared a major. After declaring a major and being assigned a major advisor, Honors students *retain* their Honors advisors as secondary advisors for their *entire time* at WCU.

Pre-Professional Advising for students who seek admission to professional schools (including, but not limited to: medicine, veterinary medicine, and law) are advised by the Director of Honors Advising, Emily Sharpe. Pre-professional advising is open to all Honors students, regardless of major.

## Contact Information

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