

The Brinson Honors College

Graduation Requirements and Requirements for Good Standing



New Honors Students starting in the summer or fall of 2020, and beyond, are under the following requirements to maintain good standing in the Brinson Honors College and graduate with full Honors.

USI 101 Requirement

- *successful completion of USI 101: Honors Forum is required*

Honors Forum is a 1 credit hour University Transition course. The course traditionally meets in a hybrid format with in person class meetings once per week and online supplementary material. The course also includes a menu of outside-of-class events and activities that help the student to further explore The Honors Path at WCU. These outside-of-class events include significant emphasis on community engagement – starting with a signature program, the *Conference on Undergraduate Regional Engagement*. Students earn the “SLC” course designation for USI 101, as well as Honors designation. Students receive a copy of the Honors Handbook in this course and are required to pass a quiz on the Handbook contents during USI 101. Students are allowed to take the quiz more than once and are able to use the Handbook as a reference during the quiz.

GPA Requirement

- *minimum WCU GPA of 3.5 at graduation is required*

To graduate with full Honors, our Honors Students must have a minimum 3.5 WCU GPA at the time they graduate. Students can check their WCU cumulative GPA using their MyWCU account and find it on their unofficial transcript. The WCU cumulative GPA is updated at the end of each semester when final grades are posted.

Honors Hours Requirement

- *minimum 27 credit hours with honors designation are required*
- OR
- *minimum 24 credit hours with honors designation and completion of DegreePlus Level 3 in any one area (professionalism, cultural responsiveness, leadership/teamwork) are required*

Honors Students have many choices when it comes to completing the Honors Hours Requirement. Honors Students typically earn credit hours with honors designation through a combination of Honors Courses and Honors Contracts. Students can also earn honors designation for Study Abroad. NOW – students can also choose a *new track* in which they can use completion of DegreePlus Level 3 to help meet this requirement! More information on how to earn Honors Hours can be found on our website and is a topic of focus in USI 101.

Students who are transferring to WCU from an Honors College or Honors Program elsewhere *may be eligible* to have some Honors hours transfer as well. Students can inquire about this by contacting the Honors College Office.

Requirements for Maintaining Good Standing

- *meet minimum GPA standard based on total earned hours scale*
- *meet honors hours earned standard for each semester*
- *successfully complete USI 101 or approved substitute in the student's first semester as an Honors Student*

These requirements are established to ensure that Honors Students continue to make progress *each semester* toward earning full Honors at graduation. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the Honors standing self-check tool to monitor their own progress and success. Students who do not meet the GPA or honors hours standards will go on Honors College probation for a semester. Students who do not meet the USI 101 completion requirement in their first semester will be withdrawn from the Honors College. If a student who is on Honors College probation does not get back into good standing at the end of the next semester, the student will be withdrawn from the Honors College.

Petition

The Brinson Honors College philosophy is to work to retain earnest students with a strong desire to complete the Honors requirements and graduate with full Honors. We understand that sometimes the hazards of life can get in the way of a student's best intentions. To this end, the Honors College allows Honors Students to petition for an accommodation or exception to a policy when the student's personal situation warrants it. Making a petition, for example, for an additional semester on Honors College probation, can give a student a little more time to get back on track and back in good standing. The Honors College staff evaluates petitions. Typically, as long as it is mathematically possible for a student to persist and graduate with full Honors, meeting the graduation requirements, petitions are decisioned favorably. Students who do not successfully complete USI 101 in their first semester may petition to complete that requirement in an alternative form in the second semester. These petitions warrant a significant life event or unusual circumstance to be granted; however, it is a possibility for the earnest student who has a desire to persist and achieve full Honors at WCU.

Honors College Scholarship Requirements

Typically, students who have an Honors College scholarship have the same requirements for renewal and maintenance of their scholarship as the requirements for the Honors College overall – with one important difference: Honors Students with Honors College Scholarships are also required to maintain a course load of at least 15 credit hours per semester. This is not an unusually high number of credit hours per semester and Honors Students frequently carry more credit hours per semester. However, it is important for Honors College scholarship holders to plan for this minimum course load each and every semester that they are enrolled. Failure to do so will result in the Honors College scholarship not being renewed. Some, one-time only, exceptions are made – for instance in a case where a student is doing student teaching. Those arrangements need to be made with the Dean of the Honors College in advance of the semester in which they are anticipated.

Students with scholarships should be aware that *some scholarships, depending on their source*, may have additional requirements. It is important that Honors Students keep a copy of their Scholarship Agreement form (which they signed online when they accepted their scholarship) and be aware of all of the requirements for renewal for their specific scholarship.

The Honors College requires that every new Honors Student meet with the Dean to go over scholarship information and requirements for renewal at the start of their first semester. Multiple sessions and options are offered to accommodate student schedules and availability. Failure to attend this meeting will result in a student losing their eligibility for renewal. Students should monitor their Catamount email for important information about signing up for one of these meeting times.

Contact Us

For more information, we recommend going to our Honors College website at honors.wcu.edu. You can also call our office with specific questions at 828 227-7383 or email us at honors@wcu.edu.