UCCS Honors Program – Cohort 2024

Vision

The UCCS Honors Program aims to foster an academic culture for intentional learners who are committed to service and personal growth, while making positive contributions to the local and global community.

Honors Program Core Values

Central to these aims is an appreciation for Gray Matters, which we understand as the unique perspective, or mindset, that multiple or competing complex views can exist at the same time. Engaging with Gray Matters allows us to appreciate diversity in both ideas and solutions. Gray Matters explores the intersection of the mind and society with a focus on how we think, learn, and live. Topics of discussion are designed to investigate the role of ambiguity in the gray spaces of human endeavor. Honors Program courses anchor the philosophy of our Honors Program, namely, that many, if not all, real-life situations are more accurately characterized as complex or Gray Matters (as opposed to black and white). Students learn adaptability and flexibility through the various Gray Matters interdisciplinary themes from disciplines such as Complex Systems, Leadership, Communication and Education, History, Ethics, Philosophy, Psychology, Mental Health, and others.

This commitment to Gray Matters is the foundation of the Honors Program's core values. Honors Program students are encouraged to embed Honors Program Core Values in their Honors Portfolio (see below).

Honors Program students will strive to embody and promote these core values:
  (a) To foster empathy and compassion for people, including oneself.
  (b) To embrace the realization that there are always multiple and diverse perspectives.
  (c) To recognize that both collective wisdom and individual solutions may be appropriate alternatives in problem solving.
  (d) To support diversity, equity, and inclusion in action and thoughts.
  (e) To exhibit open-mindedness, self-reliance, intellectual curiosity, personal responsibility, and integrity.
  (f) To promote an understanding of and appreciation for scientific discourse and scholarship.

Honors Learning Outcomes

The Honors Program motivates students who want to broaden their horizons beyond the classroom by promoting their:

- Passion for life-long learning with stimulating peer-group interactions.
- Appreciation for diversity of thought and opinion.
- Development of creative problem-solving skills and analytical thinking.
- Preparation to be outstanding candidates for future education and job opportunities.
- Contributions to the global and the local community.
- Leadership aspirations by including all perspectives in decision making.
- Understanding of Gray Matters, its ambiguity, indeterminacy, diversity, and complexity.

Academic Rigor

Students accepted in the Honors Program will:

1. Complete the "Gray Matters" course, which is a cornerstone of our program.
2. Engage in regular one-on-one faculty interaction in support of students' initiatives.
3. Demonstrate learning and growth through their Honors Program Portfolio. Portfolios provide an opportunity to deepen intentional learning in Gray Matters areas that the students are passionate about, encouraging personal growth and community impact. Good ideas need our clear and personal voices and are to be expressed succinctly and professionally. Depth in the Honors Program Portfolio can be supported in one designated course of the student's choice. The assigned Honors Program faculty advisor and the Honors Program Portfolio mentor (selected from the UCCS faculty across all departments) guide the student through the process.
4. Complete one UCCS-Honors Program designated course. See Honors Program designated course rationale and plan of study later in this document.
5. Complete HNRS 3011 Conversations Around Complexity; see plan of study later in this document.
6. Experiential learning outside the classroom with peers and mentors contributing to growth of global awareness through volunteering and engagement.

Admission Criteria and Scholarship Eligibility for 2023 Cohort

Approximately thirty $1000/year Honors Scholarships, renewable with tiered increases for a total of four years of scholarship are awarded, by invitation only, to those students who have:

(a) earned a cumulative high school GPA of at least 3.5 preferred but not required.
(b) submitted a required essay (1000 words),
(c) completed an interview with Honors Program representatives.

The Honors Admissions Committee reviews all applications and selects the invited finalists for a face-to-face interview.

Plan of Study Requirements

Students accepted in the Honors Program will have the opportunity to interact with motivated and like-minded peers, who understand that good citizenship includes contributing to society. The Honors Program accepts students from all degree programs and expects our students to complete our curriculum-based plan of study, as described below, in addition to courses in their individual degree programs.

The Honors Program curriculum is designed to be compatible with university requirements. GPS 1010/3010 (Gray Matters) fulfills a requirement for all degree programs. Many of our students embed HNRS 3011 (Conversations about Complexity) into their degree program to fulfill elective requirements and meet general education requirements. HNRS 4950 provides flexibility for students' degree programs by allowing students to choose to take this course for 1 to 3 credit hours. Students are encouraged to work with the Honors Program Director if they have questions about the Honors Program curriculum and their degree plan.

Students will graduate with University Honors if they successfully complete the following requirements:

- Students must take the Honors Program's **Gray Matters course (GPS1010/3010) (3 credit hours), the Honors version of this required first-year seminar**. This course anchors the philosophy of our Honors Program. During this class, students are assigned to their Honors Program academic advisor.

- Students must take **Conversations around Complexity (HNRS 3011) (3 credit hours),** which is typically offered in spring and summer semesters. This course is designed to help students explore ideas for their Honors Program Portfolio (HNRS 4950).
    - On a case-by-case basis, students who cannot take HNRS 3011 due to restrictions in their degree plan may petition to substitute one additional Honors Designated course with permission of the Honors Program director. Please see description of Honors Designated courses below. In addition, students will be asked to read and produce written commentary on one or more of the core UCCS Honors Program texts to cover all four designations for this course in the general education framework. Details for this additional assignment will be arranged between the student and their Honors program advisor, on a case-by-case basis, and a syllabus will be provided for these students that includes the assignments and the blue-print for meeting the HNRS 3011 course outcomes.

- Students must take **Honors Program Portfolio (HNRS 4950) (variable 1-3 credit hours)**: This class, which can be taken individually or with a group of students, is organized with the student's Honors Program Portfolio faculty advisor. Portfolios must be submitted to the Honors Program between October 30 and November 15 for the fall semester graduation, or between March 30 and April 15 for spring semester graduation. HNRS 4950 is also offered in summer semester with July 5 through July 31 submission dates. The report/submission will be reviewed by an Honors Program Portfolio mentor, and then reviewed by two Honors Program Faculty members associated with that Portfolio during that semester. The feedback must be provided to the student within ten days after the student submits their report.
    - HNRS 4950 may be taken for 1 to 3 credit hours, based on students' preferences, portfolio scope, and degree program constraints. Students should work with their Honors Program Advisor to determine how many credit hours to take in HNRS 4950.
    - All HNRS 4950 Portfolios are published as part of Kraemer Family Library's Digital Collection. It might also be placed on the Honors Program website. Portfolios may be briefly mentioned during the senior Graduation Ceremony. Other available venues for possible publication include CSURF (Colorado Springs Undergraduate Research Forum), Mountain Lion Research Day (poster presentation), regional conferences specific to student majors, and research synthesis/case studies for nursing students. Publication or presentation in national and international conferences and journals, coauthored with mentors, provides another method to satisfy these requirements and is encouraged by the Honors Program. Alternative forms of portfolio presentation will be available to disciplines where emphasis is on visual or performing arts.

- One Honors Designated course is required for all students in the Honors Program (credit hours depend on selected Designated course). These are courses students select from their degree program or other academic area, and they complete additional Honors-related work for that course.

- Students must **maintain a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 3.5**. Honors Program students whose cumulative GPA is 3.49 or below will undergo extensive review by the HP-Faculty in May and June. These students will be expected to have an upward trajectory plan for their GPA in place by June 7th. Scholarship renewal is determined on an individual basis as recommended by Honors Program faculty. These students will be required to meet with their Honors Program advisor twice a year.

- To continue receiving their scholarships, students must **participate in Honors Engagement events adding up to at least 6 hours per semester** (i.e. 12 hours per academic year). The Honors Program records attendance at these events. Honors students get many opportunities to interface with faculty and peers during Honors Program events, including several seminars and Gray Matters film series discussions organized by the Honors Program. Participation in required Honors Program events

enables students to appreciate diversity of thoughts and actions; recognize that different perspectives that may allow a better solution to emerge; become life-long learners; engage with diversity, equity, and inclusion; adjust more quickly to new situations; and be more marketable for employment and highly competitive for admission to graduate studies.

In cases of an unavoidable scheduling conflict, students may receive permission to count "outside" engagement hours toward their required total. In order to receive such permission, students should do the following: (1) contact the Honors Program team ahead of time, explaining the nature of the scheduling conflict; (2) propose an alternative event; (3) explain how this alternative event (or engagement opportunity) will involve themes, concepts, or ideas valued by the Honors Program; (4) produce a 2-page written overview and analysis of the event, after attending it. Approval of alternative engagement hours will be subject to the discretion of the Honors Program team.

*After April 15th any student lacking engagement hours will be asked to view online modules and submit a 2-page written overview and analysis of the module to the Honors Program. **The yearly deadline to satisfy all engagement hours is the end of Spring semester.)** Engagement hours must be completed in order for faculty to recommend renewal of honors scholarships.*

- ■ A Public Speaking course (COMM 2100) is recommended but not required.

Honors Program Portfolio (HNRS 4950) Requirement (variable 1-3 credit hours) Details:

An Honors Program Portfolio can take a number of forms, including: a project, a capstone, a thesis, a document, a piece of art, a framework, a movie, an animation, a poster, or a computer program, a simulation, a 2D/3D game, or another form where a student, using topics and tools in their chosen area of study, (1) explains their narrative and understanding about an experience, a problem, a case study, a theater production, a research project, a study abroad experience, or a computer program analysis (2) while also exhibiting an understanding of Gray Matters. All Portfolios are part of UCCS's digital collections.

Course Sequencing for Scholarship renewal

1. By first year or sophomore: complete GPS 1010/3010 and HNRS 3011.
2. By junior year or earlier, complete one designated course, if convenient, in student's areas of study and complete all requirements for HNRS 4950. Advisors will provide guidance for students to complete the UCCS-HP paperwork.

3. In graduating year, complete Honors Program Intent to Graduate form for in-house Honors Program Certificate of Completion.
4. Satisfy yearly engagement hour requirements (by the end of Spring semester) to continue receiving scholarship.

Students who satisfy items 1-4 will receive an in-house Certificate of Completion on Gray Matters and Complex Systems (Designated Areas) during the Honors Program's Fall or Spring Graduation ceremony.

Honors Program Designated Course Description and Rationale

Since there are very few Honors-*dedicated* courses (i.e., courses that only enroll Honors students and are offered by the Honors Program), students will also take an Honors-*designated* course by completing an Honors Program Learning contract (available on the Honors "Forms" web site) which can be edited/customized by the student. In an Honors-*designated* course, a student works with the faculty member teaching the course to identify additional work, that they can do in a class they are already taking, that goes above and beyond the standard course requirements. There are many ways to approach this task, depending on the discipline. Previous students have written essays, collaborated on research, served as tutors or lab assistants, developed their own creative work, or completed more complex work products.

Honors-designated courses are selectable from the student's primary degree program, or from any other program. Honors-designated courses will require an Honors Learning Contract (available on the Honors "Forms" web site) to be filled out by the student preferably before they take the course and to be approved by the Honors Program Director or Associate Director based on the Gray Matters. Students must earn a grade of B or higher in the course content for the course to count as their Honors Designated course. A course in the University Catalog can become an honors-designated course by completing this Honors Learning Contract form and getting all the necessary approvals. The student's UCCS-Honors Program Advisor will work with the student to complete these forms.

There is no one model that fits all courses, so we ask the instructor and student to complete a contract[1] that is turned in to the Honors Program Office. Importantly, the work agreed upon to "designate" the course for Honors should **not** be factored into the student's final grade. The faculty teaching the designated course will grade the student based on their completion of the course assignments required of all others, and the faculty will provide an additional pass/fail acknowledgement to the Honors Program Office regarding the additional work for which both the designated-course faculty and the student have contracted.

Good Standing Requirement and Tiered Scholarships

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[1] http://www.uccs.edu/Documents/honors/HonorsLearningContract.pdf

A UCCS Honors student shall not violate other University, College or Departmental rules and policies sufficient for disciplinary action.

To maintain the Honors Program Scholarship, the Honors Program expects students to have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher and completed engagement requirements each academic year. By the end of spring semester, students maintaining a GPA of 3.5 and above, satisfying engagement hour requirements, and making continued scheduled progress, as described in the Program's plan of study, towards completing the Honors Program curriculum, will continue to receive the Honors Program Scholarship for the next academic year.

Honors Program students whose cumulative GPA is equal to or less than 3.49 who have completed full engagement hours will undergo extensive review by the HP-Faculty during end of May and June, and if they continue, they must show progress towards completing the HP curriculum as indicated in the Program plan of study. These students will be expected to have an upward trajectory plan for their GPA in place by June 7th for scholarship renewal, on an individual basis as recommended by their Honors Program advisor. Additionally, these students are required to meet with their Honors Program advisor twice a year.

Students with a cumulative GPA of below 3.0 and who have completed full engagement hours will undergo extensive review by the HP-Faculty during end of May and June, and if they continue, they must show progress towards completing the HP curriculum as indicated in the Program plan of study. These students will be expected to have an upward trajectory plan for their GPA in place by about June 7th for scholarship renewal, on an individual basis as recommended by their Honors Program advisor. Additionally, these students will be required to meet their Honors Program advisor twice a year.

Students with cumulative GPA of below 3.0 and lacking engagement hours will not receive any scholarship, but they may still be encouraged to complete the Honors Program curriculum if they choose to do so.

Any student leaving the Honors Program must do so in writing to the Honors Program Administrator.

All students MUST satisfy 12 engagement hours per academic year.

COHORT 2023

	Scholarship amount	Scholarship amount for GPA of 3.5+ *and* required engagement hours	Scholarship amount for GPA of 3.0–3.49 *and* required engagement hours *and* upward trajectory requirement, if recommended by	Scholarship amount for GPA < 3.0 *and* required engagement hours *and* upward trajectory requirement, if recommended by

			Honors Program advisor	Honors Program advisor
First-year Student	$1000			
Sophomore or 30 credit hours or more		Progress check *and* $1500	Two one-on-one advising sessions *and* $1500	Two one-on-one advising sessions *and* $1000
Junior or 60 credit hours or more		Progress check *and* $2000	Two one-on-one advising sessions *and* $2000	Two one-on-one advising sessions *and* $1000
Senior or 90 credit hours of more and UCCS *Honors Program Scholars Designation*		Progress check and *minimum $2500* (additional may be possible depending upon program progress and available budget)	Two one-on-one advising sessions *and* $2500 (additional may be possible depending upon program progress and available budget)	Two one-on-one advising sessions *and* $1000 (additional may be possible depending upon program progress and available budget)
Senior or 90 credit hours of more and NO *Honors Program Scholars' Designation*		Progress check *and* $2500	Two one-on-one advising sessions *and* $2500	Two one-on-one advising sessions *and* $1000
Fifth year	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero

Students have finished the Honors Program curriculum after completing the following: GPS 1010/3010, HNRS 3011, HNRS 4950, one Honors-designated course, and 12 engagement hours each academic year.

Honors Program Graduation Designations

Students will be recognized with appropriate designations, as outlined below, at the Honors Program spring or fall graduation ceremony.

Students who have a cumulative GPA of 3.75 for all their (four or more) years at UCCS and who have satisfied all the academic requirements of their cohort year will be recognized as *Dr. Michael Hackman UCCS Honors Program Scholar*s.

Students who have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 after their last semester and who have satisfied all the academic requirements of their cohort year, including required engagement hours, will graduate with the *Peak Performer* designation from the Honors Program.

Students who have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or above (but less than 3.5) after their last semester and who have satisfied all the academic requirements of their cohort year, including required engagement hours, will graduate with the *Mountain Lion* designation.

Students who have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above (but less than 3.25) after their last semester and who have satisfied all the academic requirements of their cohort year, including required engagement hours, will graduate with the *Honors Graduate* designation.

Students whose cumulative GPA is below 3.00 but who have completed all other Honors Program requirements (see Plan of Study above) will graduate with the *Spirit in Action* designation. This designation acknowledges the Honors Program's commitment to the "once a cohort always a cohort" idea.

UCCS Honors Program Scholars' Designation:

Students who complete all requirements of the UCCS-Honors Program (GPS 1010/3010; HNRS 3011, HNRS 4950 and 1 designated course) curriculum by the first, second or third year, with at least one year still remaining from graduation from UCCS, will be part of UCCS-Honors Scholars group designation.

Students **must** inform Ms. Carol Pina, in writing by email, about their eligibility for any of the above scholarships by end of May (there is no extension), so that scholarship amounts can be adjusted for the following year. All UCCS-Honors Program scholarships are limited to a four year period that begins when a student begins the program.

Retention, Scholarship and Graduation from the Honors Program

All cohorts will remain part of the Honors Program with or without scholarship eligibility as the Honors Program supports the "once a cohort always a cohort" idea. When admitting a cohort, the Honors Program commits to providing the same academic opportunities for all students and is invested in helping students plan their degree program and complete our curriculum. All students who complete our curriculum are recognized in the fall or spring graduation ceremony.

Students must complete the **Honors Program Intent to Graduate form** (available on the Honors "Forms" web site) within 6 weeks of the start of either the fall or the spring semester. The Honors Program sends a customary email reminder about this requirement to students, but it is the students' responsibility to fill out and submit the form.

If a student wants to leave the Honors Program, they can do so by informing the Honors Program administrator, in writing or by email, that they no longer wish to be part of the Honors Program.

Honors Program Curriculum Faculty Members

Dr. Karen deVries
Dr. Joseph Kuzma
Ms. Carol Pina
Dr. Deborah Pina-Thomas
Dr. Rob Sackett
Dr. Sudhanshu Kumar Semwal
Faculty Portfolio Mentor List is updated yearly and posted on our website. Any UCCS Faculty (including Honors Program curriculum faculty) can serve as an Honors Program portfolio mentor or reader. The Honors Program continually updates this list.

The UCCS Honors Program Policy on Transfer Students
Addendum from March 10, 2017

Up to five incoming transfer students, who did not qualify for an Honors Program scholarship based on the standard criteria in place, may be admitted into the Honors Program in the fall of each year. The deadline to apply for the fall semester is April 15th. Applicants will need to submit their GPA and a statement explaining why they want to be part of the Honors Program without the scholarship[2]. Based on the recommendation of the Honors Program Admissions Committee, which will be binding, the Honors Program will inform these students of their final decision by July 1st. Transfer students must complete the entire Honors Program curriculum. Transfer students should enroll in the fall offering of GPS 3010 (Gray Matters) course, instead of GPS 1010 (Gray Matters), as GPS 3010 (Gray Matters) may provide a better fit in their plan of study to complete required Honors Program curriculum. Transfer students with more than 60 credit hours counted towards a degree program at UCCS can petition to UCCS HP-faculty to waive the requirement of GPS 1010/3010 from their plan of study for the UCCS-Honors Program. The UCCS Honors Program expects the equivalent of GPS 1010 has been taken by the transfer student at their previous institution.

Students can review the criteria for their cohort year on the Honors web site. Interested students should contact the Honors Program Associate Director or Director for further information and instructions.

UCCS Graduate School's Accelerated Masters Programs (AMP) *Honors*

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[2] After completing the first year with no scholarship at UCCS, transfer students automatically become eligible for the Honors Program scholarship, if they meet the program's criteria for all cohorts for the following year at the suitable level, and for a maximum of up to two years of scholarship at the junior and the senior level for transfer students.

Honors Program students are encouraged to explore the possibility of an [Accelerated Masters Program](#) at UCCS. Students should see the [AMP website](#) for more information and contact their UCCS-HP advisors about their interests, preferably by sophomore year.

Honors Program Scholarship Announcement

The Honors Program serves rigorously trained students who share a desire to become intentional learners. Honors student privileges include: access to the [Honors Program HUB on Gray Matters, Creativity, and Complex Systems](#); early registration; extended library check-out options; and recognition at graduation. Students work with Honors Program faculty in small Honors Program class settings, thus encouraging them to engage in a collaborative, vigorous intellectual life that prepares them for admission to and success in graduate and professional schools.

UCCS Honors Program prefers, but does not require, that our cohorts enter their first year with a cumulative high school GPA of 3.5 or above. Standardized test scores are optional for Cohort 2024. All students must enroll in the Gateway Program Seminar section on Gray Matters (GPS 1010) in the fall of the first year. Visit the [Honors Program website](#) for detailed graduation requirements and other information about the program.

Scholarship finalists are contacted for an interview by the end of February. Interviews are held in March, and applicants are notified of scholarship decisions in April. The scholarship is $1000 for first-year students, $1500 for Sophomores; $2000 for Juniors; and $2500 for Seniors (See Table in this document for exact amounts). Scholarships are dependent on students (1) making good progress towards the Honors Program curriculum requirements and receiving UCCS Honors Program Scholars designation or not; (2) satisfying annual engagement hours criteria; and (3) maintaining the expected GPA of 3.5 or above. Once accepted into the Honors Program, students are encouraged, with or without scholarships, to complete the Honors Program curriculum.

An Honors Program advisor is assigned to the student for the duration of their participation in the Honors Program, and the student is required to meet with their advisor every semester to assess the progress towards completing the Honors Program Curriculum.