

UCCS Honors program – Cohort 2022

Vision

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

Honors Learning Outcomes

Motivating 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.

Honors Program Portfolio Requirement

A Honors Program Portfolio is a project, a capstone: a document, a piece of art, a framework, a movie, an animation, a poster, a thesis project, or a portfolio where a student, using topics and tools in their chosen area of study, can explain their narrative and understanding about any of the following - an experience, a problem, a case study, a theater production, a research project, a study abroad experience, or a computer program analysis, exhibiting the student's learning of Gray Matters.

Portfolios will be part of UCCS digital collection.

Academic Rigor

Students accepted in the Honors Program will have

1. Access to the "Gray Matters" course, which is a cornerstone of our program.
2. Emphasis on regular one-on-one faculty interaction with Honors students.
3. An opportunity to demonstrate learning and growth through the Honors Program Portfolio. The Honors Program Portfolio will provide an opportunity to deepen

intentional learning in Gray Matters areas that the students are passionate about, encouraging personal growth and community impact. We believe that good ideas need our clear and personal voice, and are to be expressed succinctly and professionally. The Honors Program Portfolio depth is supported by two designated courses of the student's choice. The assigned Honors Program faculty advisor will guide the student with the Honors Program Portfolio mentor selected from the UCCS faculty members across all departments.

4. Experiential learning outside the classroom with peers and mentors contributing to growth of global awareness through volunteering and engagement.

Honors Program Core Values

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. This course anchors the philosophy of our Honors Program, namely, that **Gray** exists in real-life situations and often times there is nothing definite, black and white. Students will learn adaptability and flexibility through the various Gray Matters interdisciplinary themes from perspectives drawn from disciplines such as Complex Systems, Leadership, Communication and Education, History, Ethics, Philosophy, Psychology, Mental Health, and others.

This philosophy provides Honors Program Core Values. Honors Program students are encouraged to embed Honors Program Core Values in their Honors Portfolio.

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 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.

Eligibility Criteria for Honors Scholarship

Cohort 2022 Admission Criteria:

A total of about thirty \$1000 per year Honors Scholarships, renewable for tiered increases for four years will be awarded, by invitation only, to those students who have:

(a) Cumulative High School GPA of at least 3.5,

(b) Required Essay (1000 words)

(c) Required Interview: Either face-to-face interview at UCCS, or, if in-person face-to-face meeting is not possible, online face-to-face interview would be required.

Honors Admission Committee will review all applications and select the finalists for invitation.

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.

- Once accepted into the UCCS Honors Program, to satisfy Gateway Program Seminar (GPS) 1010/3010 requirement in their Freshman year, UCCS-Honors Program student must take UCCS Honors Program's **Gray Matters course (GPS1010/3010)**. This course anchors the philosophy of our Honors Program: that **Gray** exists in real-life situations and often times there is no definite, black and white. Students will learn adaptability and flexibility through the various Gray Matters interdisciplinary themes such as Complex Systems, Leadership, History, Ethics, Philosophy, Psychology, etc.

Besides the courses in their own degree program, Honors students are required to take the additional courses required to graduate from UCCS Honors Program as described below. Many of our students embed these courses in their degree program without additional tuition.

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

- **Public Speaking course (COMM 2100) suggested but not required.**
- **HNRS 3011 Conversations around Complexity offered in Spring and Summer semesters for students as a transition course towards two designated courses and HNRS 4950.**
- **Honors Program Portfolio (HNRS 4950):** Completed by the student or group of students in coordination with their Honors Program Portfolio faculty advisor and Honors Program Portfolio mentor. Taken in the semester when the student expects to complete the Portfolio and submit it to the Honors Program by Oct 30th for the Fall semester Graduation, and March 30th for the Spring semester Graduation. The report 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. The final report could be placed on the Honors Program website as a form of online publication by the Honors Program. These reports may be briefly mentioned by the Honors Program during the senior Graduation Ceremony, acknowledging the students' Portfolios. List of acceptable portfolio ideas have been mentioned earlier (See

Honors Program Portfolio Requirement section). Other available venues for possible publication are UCCS Kraemer Library's permanent collection, CSURF (Colorado Springs Undergraduate Research Forum), Mountain Lion Research Day (Poster presentation), regional conferences specific to student major, and Research Synthesis/Case Studies for Nursing Students. Publication or presentation in national and international conferences and journals, coauthored with their mentors, provide another method to satisfy these requirements, and is encouraged by the UCCS Honors Program. Alternative forms of portfolio presentation will be available to disciplines where emphasis is on theater, filmmaking, etc. Student should work with their assigned Honors Program academic advisor, assigned during GPS 1010 Gray Matters class, to explore a variety of Portfolio topics available to them to satisfy the Honors Program Portfolio requirement.

- **Two honors-designated courses:** selectable from the student's primary degree program, or from any other program. Honors-designated courses will require an Honors' Program learning contract to be filled out by the student before they take the courses and be approved by Honors Program Director/Associate Director. UCCS Honors Program also may maintain a list of possible designated courses as merely suggestions. Grade of B or higher required. A course in the University Catalog can become an honors-designated course by completing the Honors learning contract form available at <https://www.uccs.edu/honors/> - hover on Forms, and get all the necessary approvals.
- **Maintain a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 3.5.**
- **Honors Program students whose cumulative GPA is between 3.0 and 3.49 will undergo extensive review by the HP-Faculty during May and June. 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 UCCS-HP Advisor; additionally these students will be required to meet their Honors Program advisor face-to-face (in person or online) twice a year.**
- **Engagement of at least 6 hours per semester (at least 12 hours per AY)** is required¹ and expected of all Honors students. UCCS Honors Program will record attendance. Honors students get many opportunities to interface with faculty and peers during several mandatory or voluntary events including a social get together, Honors Program events, and other community/volunteer events (Alzheimer's walk, hiking activities, student clubs such as Undergraduate Research Journal, etc.), including several seminars and Gray Matters film series discussions organized by the UCCS Honors Program. Engagement requirement can be satisfied by attending Honors Program events, other UCCS Honors Program suggested Talk series, attending several relevant events organized throughout the University, e.g., lectures from Sustainability and even attending performances by TheatreWorks. We believe that participation in the required Honors Program events will make Honors students life-long learners, quicker to adjust to new situations, more marketable for employment, and highly competitive for admission to graduate studies.

¹ Required to continue receiving UCCS Honors Program Scholarship.

- In addition, the semester the student is completing the Honors Program Portfolio (usually the Fall or the Spring of junior/senior year) the engagement form requirement will be waived to focus exclusively on the HNRS 4950 Honors Program Portfolio report.

Course Sequencing

1. Fall Freshman: GPS 1010/3010 (Gray Matters): Assigned Honors faculty advisor will teach and advise incoming Freshman.
2. Freshman Spring: Student should work with assigned Honors Program Faculty advisor to identify a UCCS faculty mentor for the student's Honors Portfolio, and two student-selected (designated) courses. Student takes HNRS 3011, if possible, or if not possible due to scheduling conflicts, then in the sophomore year.
3. Fall Sophomore, if possible: Student-selected, Honors Program Designated Course One. At the end of this course, the student will define the basic Honors Portfolio idea.
4. Spring Sophomore if possible: Student-selected, Honors Program Designated Course Two. At the end of this course, the student will define the basic Honors Portfolio idea.
5. Junior or Senior Fall or Spring semester: HNRS 4950 (Honors Program Portfolio): Student completes Honors Portfolio working with Honors Portfolio mentor, and two readers for review in preparation for Graduation in Fall, or by April for Graduation in Spring.
6. Student graduates from Honors Program.

COMM 2100 (Public Speaking) course suggested but not required.

Honors Program Designated Course Rationale

Since there are very few Honors-*Dedicated* courses (i.e., courses that only enroll Honors students and are offered by UCCS Honors Program) most students opt to take Honors-*Designated* courses by completing an Honors Program learning contract (as explained earlier). In an Honors-*Designated* course, a student works with a faculty member to identify additional work they can do that goes above and beyond the standard course requirements. There are many different ways to approach this depending on the discipline. In the past, students have written essays, collaborated on research, served as a tutor or lab assistant for others in class, developed their own creative work or completed more complex work products. There is no one model that fits all courses, so we ask the instructor and student to complete a contract² that is turned in to the UCCS Honors Program Office. One final point of note: the work agreed upon to "designate" the course for Honors should not be factored into the final grade awarded to the student. The faculty teaching the designated course will still grade the student based on their completion of the course assignments required of all others, but the faculty teaching the designated course will provide an additional pass/fail acknowledgement UCCS Honors Program Office, in regard to the additional work for which both the designated-course faculty and the student have contracted.

² <http://www.uccs.edu/Documents/honors/HonorsLearningContract.pdf>

Dr. Michael Hackman UCCS Honors Scholars

Students with a cumulative UCCS GPA of 3.75 for all their (four or more) years at UCCS, and graduating with 3.75 or higher cumulative GPA at UCCS, will be recognized as *Dr. Michael Hackman UCCS Honors Program Scholars*. These students will be recognized at the UCCS Honors Program's Fall or Spring Graduation Ceremony.

Good Standing Requirement in the Honors Program

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 has a Cumulative GPA expectation of 3.5**. Students maintaining 3.5 and above, satisfying the Engagements requirements, and making continued progress towards completing Honors Program curriculum including HNRS 3011 blueprint, and others, will continue to receive the Honors Program Scholarship for next academic year.

Honors Program students whose cumulative GPA is between 3.0 and 3.49 will undergo extensive review by the HP-Faculty during May and June. 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 UCCS-HP Advisor; additionally, these students will be required to meet their Honors Program advisor face-to-face (in person or online) twice a year.

Students with cumulative GPA of below 3.0 will not receive any scholarship, but they may still be encouraged to complete the HP requirements if they choose to do so. Any student leaving the Honors Program must do so in writing to the Honors Program Administrator.

Honors Program Graduation Requirement and Designations

To graduate with the *Peak Performer* designation from the **UCCS Honors Program** students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 after their last semester and satisfy all the academic requirements of their cohort year, including required engagement hours. The student will be recognized during the UCCS Honors Program's Fall or Spring Graduation Ceremony either online or in-person based on UCCS Honors Program schedule.

If a student has a cumulative GPA after their last semester at UCCS of 3.25 or above, but less than 3.5, and satisfies all requirements of the Honors Program as stated above, then they will graduate with the **UCCS Honors Program Mountain Lion** designation and will be recognized during the UCCS Honors Program's Fall or Spring Graduation Ceremony.

To graduate with the *Honors Graduate* designation from the **UCCS Honors Program** students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 but below 3.25 after their last semester and satisfy all the academic requirements of their cohort year, including required engagement hours. The student will be recognized during the UCCS Honors Program's Fall or Spring Graduation Ceremony either online or in-person based on UCCS Honors Program schedule.

A student whose cumulative GPA is below 3.00, but who has completed all other Honors Program requirements (see Plan of Study p. 3 of this document), will receive a designation of UCCS Honors Program *Spirit in Action* during graduation. This acknowledges the UCCS Honors Program value of "*once a cohort always a cohort.*"

Retention, Scholarship and Graduation from UCCS-Honors Program

All cohorts will remain part of the UCCS-Honors Program (UCCS-HP) with or without the scholarship eligibility as ***UCCS-HP supports the once a cohort always a cohort*** idea. By accepting a cohort, UCCS-HP is committed to providing the same academic opportunities to all students and is invested completely in helping students plan their degree program as well as complete our curriculum. All students who complete our curriculum are recognized in an online or in-person ceremony or both in Fall and Spring by HP-faculty.

Students must complete the UCCS Honors Program intent to graduate form within six-weeks of the start of the Fall and Spring semester, and within 3-weeks of Summer term. UCCS-Honors Program will send a customary reminder by email. However, it is students' responsibility to contact UCCS Honors Program about their intent to graduate.

If for some reason a student wants to leave the UCCS-HP they can always do so by informing the UCCS-Honors Program Admin in writing or by email that they no longer wish to be part of the UCCS-Honors Program.

Honors Program Curriculum Faculty Members

Dr. Deborah Pina-Thomas <https://uccs.edu/xiphi/staff/deborah-pina-thomas>

Dr. Karen deVries, <https://philosophy.uccs.edu/staff/karen-devries>

Dr. Joseph Kuzma, http://www.uccs.edu/philosophy/joseph_kuzma.html

Dr. Rob Sackett, <http://www.uccs.edu/history/rob-sackett.html>

Dr. Sudhanshu Kumar Semwal, www.cs.uccs.edu/~semwal

UCCS Faculty Portfolio mentor list <https://honors.uccs.edu/id-4950-mentor-list-and-portfolio-information>

Any **UCCS Faculty** can serve as Honors Program portfolio mentor or a reader, including the Honors Program curriculum faculty. The Honors Program is continually updating/adding to the above list.

Transfer students must complete a plan of study which is consistent with the above plan of study and will register for GPS 3010 in their first semester at UCCS. A transfer student must submit their Honors Program Portfolio and finish all requirements of the honors program if planning on graduating that year.

The UCCS Honors Program Policy 03-10-2017

Up to five students, who did not qualify for an Honors Program scholarship based on standard criteria in place, incoming transfer students, may be admitted into the Honors Program in Fall of each year. The deadline to apply will be April 15th every year. The Honors Program will need their GPA, and a statement as to why the student wants to be part of the Honors Program **without the scholarship**³. Based on the recommendation of the Honors Program Admissions Committee, which will be binding, the Honors Program will inform these students by July 1st of the final decision. Transfer students still must complete the Honors Program curriculum. Honors Program Faculty asks that transfer students enroll in 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.

Please review the criteria for your Cohort year at <https://www.uccs.edu/honors/> and hover on cohorts. If you qualify, then contact Associate Director/Director, Honors Program for further instructions to submit the paperwork for consideration by April 15th for the Fall semester.

Other Resources

- Experiential learning: University of Washington <http://depts.washington.edu/uwhonors/reqs/exp/>
- Rated high honors program <http://honors.ucf.edu/about-us>

UCCS Honors Program Scholarship Announcement

³ After completing the first year with no scholarship at UCCS, transfer students would automatically become eligible for UCCS Honors Program scholarship, if they meet UCCS-HP 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.

The UCCS Honors Program serves rigorously trained students who share a desire to become intentional learners. Students have access to the UCCS Honors Program HUB, are afforded early registration privileges, extended library check-out options, and are given special recognition at graduation. Students work with Honors Program faculty in smaller 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. Students must be entering freshmen with a cumulative high school GPA of 3.5 or above; test scores are optional for Cohort 2022. All students must enroll in the Gateway Program Seminar (GPS) 1010 (Gray Matters) course in their first year. Visit the [UCCS Honors Program](http://www.uccs.edu/~honors/) website for detailed graduation requirements and other information (e.g. Honors Program Values under cohort 2022 tab) about the program.

Finalists will be contacted for an interview by the end of February. Interviews will be held in March on campus. Applicants will be notified of scholarship results in April. Scholarship is \$1000 for first-year students (Freshmen), from \$1000 up to \$1500 for Sophomores; from \$1000 up to \$2000 for Juniors; and from \$1000 up to \$2500 for Seniors, and if the student is making good progress towards Honors Program curriculum; satisfies engagement hours criteria; and maintains the expected GPA of 3.5 or above. A student, once accepted into the Honors Program, is encouraged to continue to complete the Honors Program curriculum, with or without the scholarship. An Honors Program advisor is assigned to the student for the duration of their participation in the UCCS Honors Program, and the student is required to meet with their advisor every semester to assess the progress towards completing the UCCS Honors Program Curriculum.