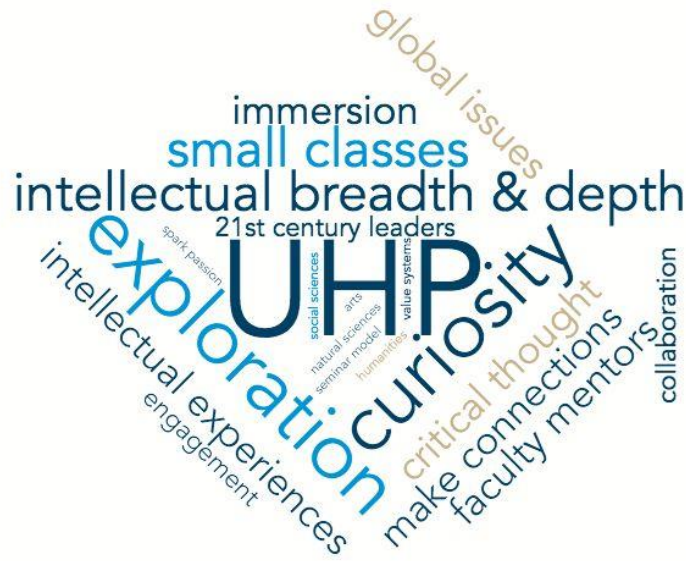


# University Honors Program

## *Student Handbook*

Academic Year (AY) 2024-25  
Revised 6/14/24



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# Curriculum

The University Honors Program (UHP) curriculum is comprised of 10 courses (7 courses for Sophomore Admits) that students must complete in order to graduate from the UHP. An overview is provided below, but more detailed information can be found at <https://honorsprogram.gwu.edu/program-requirements>.

## Introductory Courses for First Year Admits

Origins and Evolution of Modern Thought  
(HONR 1015 and HONR 1016)  
Scientific Reasoning and Discovery  
(HONR 1033 and HONR 1034)

## Introductory Courses for Sophomore Admits

Enlightenment: East and West  
(HONR 2016)  
\*Offered in Fall semester only.\*

## Upper Level Courses (for All Honors Students)

Two Arts and Humanities courses (HONR 2053)  
Two Self and Society courses (HONR 2047)

## Final Courses (for All Honors Students)

Honors Capstone (HONR 4199)  
Senior Thesis (HONR 4198)

**Total for First Year Admits:  
10 courses**

**Total for Sophomore Admits:  
7 courses**

Students who successfully complete **all** program requirements and graduate with a final cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher will receive the notation of “**University Honors Program Graduate**” on their transcript.

Students who successfully complete most (but not all) program requirements and graduate with a final cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher will receive the notation of “**University Honors Program Scholar**” on their transcript. Students who joined the Honors Program their first semester at GW must complete all the first-year courses (HONR 1015, 1016, 1033, and 1034, or pre-approved science alternatives), the Honors Capstone, and at least 3 of the 5 remaining requirements. Students who joined the Honors Program their sophomore year at GW must complete “Enlightenment: East and West”, the Honors Capstone, and at least 3 of the 5 remaining requirements. For specific questions regarding which notation will appear on your transcript, please contact a Program Manager.

Honors courses must be completed within the Honors Program and cannot be fulfilled by AP, IB, transfer, or study abroad credit. Exceptions to this policy include:

- Pre-approved alternatives can replace Scientific Reasoning & Discovery requirements and can be found at <https://honorsprogram.gwu.edu/scientific-reasoning-and-discovery>.
- Courses that have been approved through the upper-level course substitution policy: <https://honorsprogram.gwu.edu/upper-level-course-substitution-option>.
- Courses approved through the Senior Thesis Verification form can fulfill the Honors Senior Thesis Requirement. More information can be found in the Senior Thesis Info packet online.
- Other pre-approved courses as determined by the Honors Program.

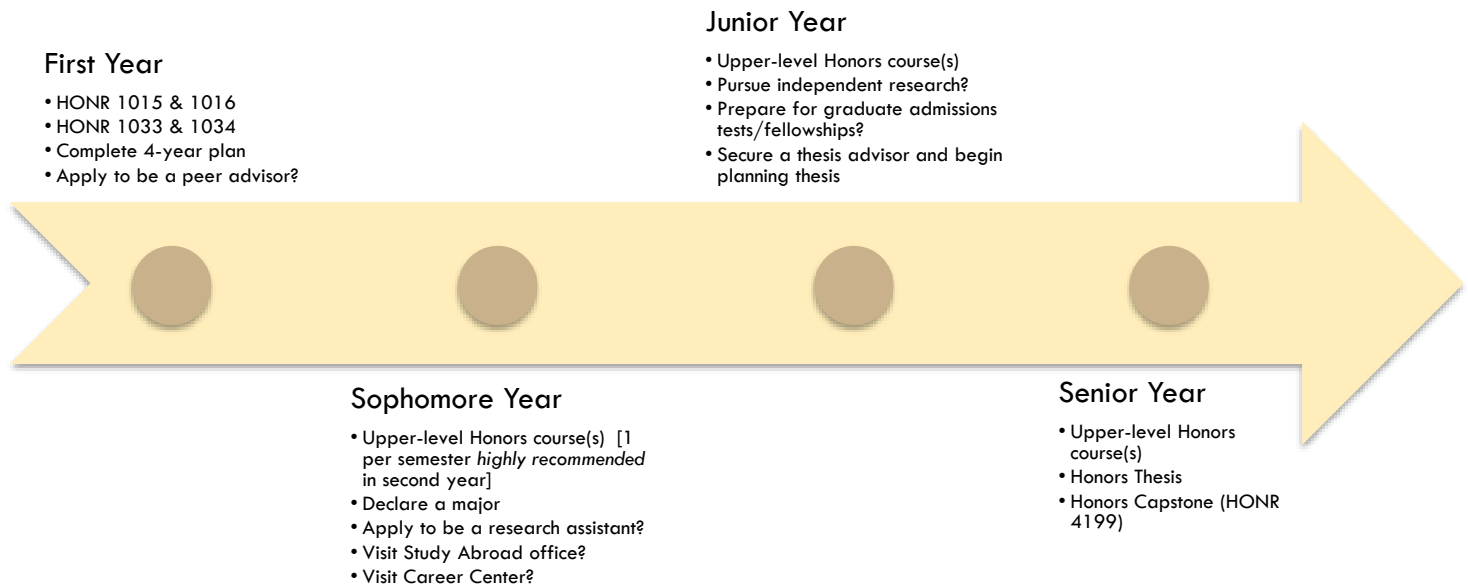
## GWU General Education Requirements Fulfilled by UHP Courses, by School

| Tier   | Description  | Course Requirement                          | Honors courses which satisfy that requirement   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Tier One Requirements</b><br>(required of <u>all</u> GW students, regardless of school) | University-Wide General Education Requirements (GPACs)<br><i>** all GW students must complete these graduation requirements **</i> | UW 1020 (first-year writing)                | HONR 1015   |
|  |  | 1 scientific reasoning                      | HONR 1033 or 1034   |
|  |  | 1 critical thinking: humanities             | HONR 1016   |
|  |  | 2 critical thinking: social sciences        | HONR 2044 or 2047/2047W   |
|  |  | 1 oral communication                        | HONR 1034   |
|  |  | 2 writing in the discipline (WID)           | HONR 2047W or 2053W   |
|  |  | 1 quantitative reasoning                    | N/A   |
| <b>Tier Two Requirements</b><br>(additional school-specific requirements)                  | CCAS (Columbian)   | 1 additional scientific reasoning           | HONR 1033 or 1034   |
|  |  | 1 additional critical thinking: humanities  | HONR 2053/2053W   |
|  |  | Local/civic engagement                      | HONR 1033   |
|  |  | 1 global or cross-cultural                  | N/A   |
|  |  | 1 creative or critical thinking in the arts | N/A   |
|  |  | CCAS 1001 (first-year experience)           | N/A   |
|  | ESIA (Elliott)   | 2 additional critical thinking: humanities  | HONR 2053/2053W   |
|  |  | IAFF 1001 (first-year experience)           | N/A   |
|  | GWSB (Business)  | “Pre-business course” ECON 1012             | HONR 2044<br><i>GWSB UHP students are guaranteed a seat in Honors Macro, if they want one.</i>  |
|  | SEAS (Engineering)<br>(requirements vary by specific major)  | “Humanities Electives”                      | HONR 1016, 2016 or 2053/2053W   |
|  |  | “Social Science Electives”                  | HONR 2044 or 2047/2047W   |
|  |  | PHIL 2135                                   | <i>PHIL 2135 counts as an UHP Arts &amp; Humanities course (2053) for SEAS students only.</i>   |
|  |  | SEAS 1001 (first-year experience)           | N/A   |
| GWSPH (Milken)   | PUBH 1010 (first-year experience)  | N/A   |   |
| <b>Tier Three Requirements</b><br>(specific major requirements)                            | Major Requirements   | Varied requirements by major.               | <i>Some upper-level Honors courses fulfill various major and minor requirements. <b>Such designations are determined by individual GW</b></i> |

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |  | <b>departments (not by the UHP).</b><br><i>Please see the UHP Course Descriptions website or speak with your departmental advisor for more information.</i> |
|--|--|--|---|

## Four-Year Timeline

Honors students explore many opportunities during their four years at GW. Some suggestions are outlined below, all of which can be discussed with Program Managers.



## Early Graduation

The UHP is a holistic program intended to immerse students in the liberal arts and sciences, as well as independent research, and the curriculum requirements are designed with the assumption that a student will spend the standard **4 years** (8 semesters, not including summers) in residence at GW (including study-abroad). Students who intend to graduate early (in 3 or 3.5 years) are still responsible for completing the full Honors curriculum in order to receive the “UHP Graduate” transcript notation and may not “double-up” on upper-level UHP courses in any semester without pre-approval from a Program Manager. While it is possible to complete the full Honors curriculum in just 3 years, students who plan on graduating early will need to plan ahead and to make strategic choices about what they can realistically accomplish in an abbreviated time at GW. For example, early graduation typically restricts a student to completing no more than one major and one minor, and limits study-abroad to short-term or summer opportunities. Additionally, it is the responsibility of a student intending to graduate in just 3 years to communicate their thesis plan to the UHP Program Managers by the end of their **second year** at GW.

## UHP/Global Bachelor's Program

Students may be members of both the UHP and the Global Bachelor's Program (GBP). As the GBP requires a student to study-abroad for 3 semesters, UHP/GBP students will need to plan ahead and to make strategic choices about what they can realistically accomplish above and beyond these two programs (for example, it is likely not feasible to double major while also completing these two programs). UHP/GBP students are still responsible for completing the full Honors curriculum in order to receive the "UHP Graduate" transcript notation and may not "double-up" on upper-level UHP courses in any semester without pre-approval from a Program Manager. It is *strongly recommended* that UHP/GBP students make use of the UHP's "[Upper-level Course Substitution Policy](#)" during one of their semesters abroad (and should note that the deadlines for this policy coincide with GW's academic calendar, even if a student is abroad). The Honors Senior Thesis requirement can be completed while abroad, but still must be overseen by a full-time GW faculty member (this can be done remotely via Zoom, for example).

## Contract Courses

When supervised by a full-time GW faculty member, Honors students can earn academic credit for their participation in various academic-focused projects. In order to earn credit, students must submit an Honors Contract. For more information on Honors Contract courses, please visit our website here:

<https://honorsprogram.gwu.edu/contract-courses>.

Due dates for course contracts will be strictly enforced. Please be in contact with a Program Manager well ahead of any due date if you will be in need of an extension.

Students are **not permitted** to take Honors Contract courses during their 1<sup>st</sup> semester at GW. First-year students in their 2<sup>nd</sup> semester must be in good academic standing with the program in order to take a contract course and are only allowed to enroll in a 1 or 2 credit-hour contract graded in the pass/no pass mode. *Contracts will only be accepted from 2<sup>nd</sup> semester first-year students who have been granted pre-authorization by a UHP Program Manager at the end of the fall semester.*

### Internship (HONR 2182)

Students who secure an internship placement can get academic credit by arranging a faculty-supervised project related to their internship.

### Undergraduate Research (HONR 2184) and Research Assistantship (HONR 2185)

Honors students can participate in either guided or independent research projects. Students interested in becoming engaged in research are encouraged to view the current research assistantship openings on the UHP website:

<https://honorsprogram.gwu.edu/research-assistantships>.

## Policies & Procedures

### Scholastic Requirements

To remain in good standing in the Honors Program, you must fulfill the following program requirements:

- Successful completion (**C- or better**) of HONR 1015 + 1033 (or pre-approved science alternative) during first-year **fall** and HONR 1016 + 1034 (or pre-approved science alternative) during first-year **spring** (or successful completion of HONR 2016 during second-year **fall** for "sophomore admit" students)
- Attendance at **all** required first-year advising events and meetings
- Minimum cumulative GPA of **3.0** at the end of your first year and a **3.0** by the time of graduation
- A minimum load of **12 academic credit hours** every semester (some exceptions to this policy are permitted, see details below)

- Successful completion (C- or better) of all upper-level Honors courses
- Sustained progress toward completing program requirements
- Maintenance of both academic integrity and proper student conduct

### **Periodic Grade Review & Academic Probation or Dismissal**

Honors students' academic performances are reviewed at the end of each semester (except during semesters when a student is studying abroad). Students who have not met the curriculum, GPA, credit load, or any other requirements of the program will be notified and subject to probation and/or dismissal from the program. *Students must successfully complete (C- or better) HONR 1015 and 1033 (or pre-approved alternative) in their first-year fall semester and HONR 1016 and 1034 (or pre-approved alternative) in their first-year spring semester in order to maintain membership in the program. Without exception, students who earn a grade lower than C- (or a "W" or "Z") in any of these courses will be dismissed from the program. Likewise, sophomore admit students must successfully complete HONR 2016 in the fall semester of their second year. Please note that UHP courses **cannot** be repeated under "undergraduate academic forgiveness". After a semester on probation, any student who does not fulfill the terms of their probation will be dismissed from the program. This decision is final and cannot be appealed.*

Dismissal from the program does not affect housing assignments, but students who are dismissed from the program will be automatically disenrolled from any Honors courses that they are registered for in the following semester.

### **Credit Hour Exceptions**

Students in their final semester of undergraduate study are exempt from the credit hour requirement but should check to see if part-time status affects their financial and/or merit aid. Other exceptions to the credit hour policy are also allowed on a case-by-case basis (for example, due to DSS accommodations), please speak with a UHP Program Manager if you plan to enroll in fewer than 12 credits.

## **Registration**

Typically, registration takes place during the first weeks of November and April. The official registration schedule is determined and posted by the Office of the Registrar.

### **Advanced Registration**

Due to the structured Honors curriculum, Honors students in good standing will have advanced registration for their second, third, and fourth semesters. The advanced registration date is not posted on the official registration schedule and will be communicated to Honors students over email via the weekly newsletter and on the Honors blog (<https://blogs.gwu.edu/honorsprogram/>). It is the responsibility of all Honors students to read the newsletter and any communications pertaining to registration. *First-year students must attend all required advising meetings and fulfill all other program requirements communicated by the Program Managers in order to receive advanced registration.*

### **Holds**

Students are personally responsible for identifying and clearing any registration holds prior to registration. The UHP Program Managers cannot remove registration holds.

### **Upper-level Honors Courses**

In order to maximize the availability of seats for all students, during the *initial undergraduate registration period* students cannot enroll in more than one upper-level Honors seminar (HONR 2047: Self & Society and HONR 2053: Arts & Humanities) unless they have obtained pre-approval from a Program Manager. Unless pre-approval has been granted, students enrolled in more than one upper-level Honors course will be dropped from one of those courses following their initial undergraduate student registration period (unless you qualify for advanced registration, your registration day will be assigned by the [Registrar based on your credit hours completed](#)).

During the *initial undergraduate registration period*, students may simultaneously enroll in one upper-level seminar and any number of the following: (1) pre-approved non-Honors courses counting toward an Honors requirement (such as upper-level course substitutions and Senior Thesis courses), (2) Honors contract courses (HONR 2182, 2184, 2185 and 4198), (3) the Honors Capstone (HONR 4199), and/or (4) HONR 2044.



UHP students may freely register for additional upper-level Honors seminars (HONR 2047: Self & Society and HONR 2053: Arts & Humanities) once the **general registration period** opens.

Additionally, students in their **first year** cannot be enrolled in any upper-level Honors courses (with the exception of HONR 2044 and limited contract courses in the first-year spring).

### **Upper-level Course Substitution Policy**

On occasion, a UHP student may have a particular interest in a certain course or topic outside of their major which we are not able to offer formally through the UHP but which may nonetheless conform to some or all of the ideals of an Honors course. If a UHP student can demonstrate that they will benefit personally and intellectually from that course, they may be granted an exception to count **one** non-UHP course toward the UHP upper-level course requirements. Please see the UHP's ["Upper-Level Course Substitution Option"](#) website for full details and relevant deadlines.

### **Honors Senior Thesis**

A Senior Thesis is broadly defined as a substantial work of independent scholarship that culminates in a written product, presentation or performance. There are various ways to complete the Honors Senior Thesis which are outlined in the "Senior Thesis Information Packet". The Honors Senior Thesis **must** be completed in a student's senior year. Independent research conducted in earlier years cannot be used to fulfill the Senior Thesis requirement, but students pursuing multi-year/semester work may culminate that work into a Senior Thesis during their senior year. Unless a student is pursuing a year-long research project, we strongly recommend that the thesis be completed one semester *prior* to the semester of graduation (e.g. a student planning on graduating in Spring 2025 should complete their thesis in Fall 2024).

In order to be eligible to complete the Honors Senior Thesis requirement, students must communicate their thesis plan to the UHP Program Managers **by the end of their junior year** (a "Senior Thesis Communication Form" will be emailed to students in the spring of their junior year). While a full-formed thesis plan is not due at that time, students must have secured a thesis advisor and determined which thesis pathway they will be using (e.g. HONR 4098 or a departmental thesis). This requirement will be strictly enforced, so please be in contact with a Program Manager well ahead of the "Communication Form" due date if you need help with planning your thesis. Students who develop close relationships with faculty (both within and outside the Honors Program) during their early years at GW are more easily able to identify and secure a thesis mentor.

### **Cross-listed Courses**

Without exception, students must be enrolled in the HONR section of a cross-listed course in order to receive Honors credit for the course. This policy is necessary because many UHP students register before all other students at the university, but seats in these cross-listed classes also need to remain open and reserved for other GW students. When registering for a cross-listed course, pay close attention to the CRN number so that you register correctly.

### **Waitlists**

Honors students cannot be guaranteed a seat in any particular section. If your preferred Honors section is filled, you will need to enroll in a different section. For upper-level courses, you can also add yourself to a course waitlist when general registration opens, and you will be notified if a seat becomes available. When revisiting your schedule, be mindful that if you do de-register from any course your seat may quickly be taken by another student and you may not be able to re-enroll.

Waitlists are not available for first-year courses. Please contact a Program Manager if you are unable to register for a first-year course.

Individual Honors faculty are **not** permitted to enroll students in courses that are full and have an active waitlist. Please do not email/contact faculty about enrolling in a closed or waitlisted course. If you encounter a complex scheduling situation, please speak with a Program Manager as soon as possible.

## Grades and Grading

Honors Program students are required to earn a grade of C- or better in all Honors classes to receive credit for completing the corresponding curricular requirement.

### Individual UHP Course Grading Policies

All faculty at GW, including UHP faculty, have independent control of their grading policies and procedures. Neither GW nor the UHP mandate any specific course grading scheme (for example, absolute vs. curved, or the exact numerical to letter conversion employed) and faculty are at liberty to require students to attend class and actively participate. Faculty must communicate their individual course grading policies to students via the syllabus at the beginning of the semester and it is the students' responsibility to read these policies carefully for each course in which they are enrolled. Students should consult directly with a faculty member if they have any questions related to a course's grading policies. Students are also responsible for monitoring their own progress over the semester. Some faculty will choose to make use of the Blackboard (Bb) gradebook, but students should consider any Bb gradebook total average or sum only a rough estimate until *all* course assignments have been completed (as the total value will change significantly over the semester as more assignments are input into the system).

For individual assignments, faculty must also provide students with grading guidelines or grading rubrics. Faculty may require students to submit assignments in a certain format (for example, as a hardcopy or a PDF) and/or style (for example, APA or MLA or using a template) *and are not obligated to accept or give credit for work that does not meet all the stated requirements, or which is submitted late*. Students, therefore, must read and follow all assignment instructions and carefully monitor assignment due dates/times.

Honors courses are designed to be rigorous and challenging, and students should expect UHP faculty to make use of the full grading scale, with A grades reserved for those students who demonstrate an exceptional engagement with and understanding of the course material. That said, you will also find that achieving at least a C- (and usually better!) in UHP courses is absolutely achievable for any student that consistently attends class, puts in the appropriate effort, and completes all the required course assignments.

### Arbitrary or Capricious Academic Evaluation

The Honors program procedure for cases of alleged arbitrary or capricious academic evaluation can be found [here](#). Claims must be made in a timely manner (see the procedure document for full requirements). Note that these procedures only apply to students in the UHP who are registered in a course under the HONR designation. All other cases of alleged arbitrary or capricious academic evaluation should be pursued via the grievance process internal to the respective school (e.g., CCAS, ESIA, SEAS). Students alleging arbitrary and capricious grading must be prepared to demonstrate that their work was graded in a way that was substantially different from the way that other students' work was evaluated by the same faculty member, or that a faculty member did not follow the grading procedures stated in their course syllabus.

### Academic Forgiveness Cannot be Applied to UHP Courses

Please be aware that the university's "undergraduate academic forgiveness" policy **cannot** be applied to UHP courses, due to the changing nature of special topics courses and the fact that only members of the UHP are eligible to enroll in HONR courses.

If a UHP student earns a grade below C- in an upper-level Honors course *but otherwise remains in good standing with the program*, then that student can choose to take another upper-level course in order to successfully complete the Honors curricular requirements. The original course and grade, however, will remain on that student's transcript.

### Pass/No Pass

Honors classes a part of our core curriculum cannot be taken with the pass/no pass grading option (with the exception of the Honors Capstone, which is always graded pass/no pass).

## Incompletes

For all courses, including those in Honors, students may seek the notation “I” to indicate their inability to complete the required course work in a timely fashion due to circumstances beyond their control. Students are responsible for informing the instructor of these circumstances, and for seeking the instructor's approval before the date when grades must be reported. Approval for an incomplete will only be granted to students who had been making successful progress in the class prior to encountering that circumstance and is at the professor's discretion. The student and professor are required to complete an Incomplete Grade Contract and encouraged to submit it to the student's home school. Please also inform a Program Manager if you are taking an Incomplete. For more information, see the GW Bulletin: <http://bulletin.gwu.edu/university-regulations/#incompletes>. Incompletes in first-year courses (or HONR 2016) must be converted to a grade of C- or better by the end of the *following semester* in order for students to remain in good standing in the program.

## Withdrawals

In alignment with University Policy, students may withdraw from an Honors course through the last day of classes. Withdrawals from an Honors class past the 10<sup>th</sup> week of classes require the submission of an RTF form to an Honors Program Manager. *Late withdrawals are not permitted.* Note that if withdrawing from a first-year Honors course results in a student not completing the first-year curriculum requirements (HONR 1015, 1016, 1033, 1034, or pre-approved science alternative) or not completing HONR 2016 for sophomore admits, then that student will be dismissed from the program.

## Student Feedback on Honors Courses

All Honors courses use the University's online Student Feedback system operated by the Office of Survey Research and Analysis. Students will receive notification of the availability of the feedback survey via email. Students should feel comfortable providing honest and constructive feedback as all feedback is completed anonymously and faculty do not receive student feedback until after grades are due.

Please take the feedback process seriously. Faculty place a high value on your anonymous comments, and feedback plays an important role in improving learning in future semesters. Your honest and thoughtful opinions are invaluable to the Honors Program and all the other departments at GW.

## Student Code of Conduct

Participation in the UHP is a benefit that can be revoked if a student's academic performance or general conduct does not live up to the ideals of a UHP member. The UHP seeks to foster a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all learners. Behavior inside or outside the classroom that disrupts this learning environment will be grounds for dismissal.

## Periodic Conduct Reviews

The UHP will administer a conduct review of all UHP students at the end of each Fall and Spring semester. The Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities adjudicates all alleged infractions of the Code of Student Conduct and reports any students found in violation of policy to the UHP during these conduct reviews. Any UHP student found in violation of the Code of Student Conduct who receives a status sanction more severe than a warning may be dismissed from the program. If you receive any student conduct sanction (even a minor one), we recommend you proactively speak with a Program Manager regarding your situation. While we cannot guarantee any outcomes, proactive communication will be viewed favorably by the UHP.

## Bias Incident Reporting

Any student who experiences or witnesses an [act of bias](#) at GW and/or the UHP is encouraged to report the incident [online, by phone, or in person](#). These reports are investigated by GW's [Bias Incident Response Team \(BIRT\)](#). The BIRT was established to respond with resources, support, and actions.

## **Academic Integrity**

The Honors Program is committed to the integrity of academic inquiry and scholarship. Academic dishonesty is contrary to its ideals and goals. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty whose sanction is more severe than the failure of a single assignment, or students found guilty of any second act of academic dishonesty, will be dismissed from the Honors Program. GW's Code of Academic Integrity can be found at: <https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity>.

## **Community & Support**

The University Honors Program extends far beyond the classroom and strongly emphasizes its community of life-long learners. This community includes a plethora of community resources, including housing, advising, events, leadership opportunities, and more.

### **Living & Learning Communities (LLCs)**

Under the guidance of Community Coordinators, first-year students will participate in an Honors Living and Learning Community in West Hall at the Mount Vernon Campus. Afterward, students will have the option to live in an upper-class Honors Living & Learning Community on the Foggy Bottom Campus.

### **Advising (UHP Program Managers)**

Honors students have access to dedicated Honors advisors (the UHP Program Managers) who are available to help with academic planning and personal support throughout their time in the program. Students are required to attend first-year advising events and meetings. Afterward, they are encouraged to check in at least once a semester about academic progress. Students can schedule an appointment on our website: <https://honorsprogram.gwu.edu/make-appointment>

### **Peer Advisor Program**

UHP Peer Advisors serve a key role in the University Honors Program as program ambassadors, peer mentors, and community leaders. They are vital resources at events like Inside GWU and New Student Orientation; and provide guidance to first-year students in the Honors Program. Each of our peer advisors has unique insights on various aspects of university life and our intention is to pair first-year students with a peer advisor who can best support them as they begin their time in the UHP and at GW. Students interested in becoming an Honors Peer Advisor should look for the application call in our weekly newsletter each spring semester.

### **Community Events**

The University Honors Program offers many community events throughout the year, including guest speakers, hikes, and dinners. All Honors students, staff, and faculty are encouraged to attend. The events will be advertised in our weekly newsletter and on social media. Some events will require RSVPs so that we can know the right number/amount of tickets or food (etc.) to purchase. We ask that you RSVP only for those events that you will make every effort to attend. If you are unable to attend an event for which you have RSVPed, please email [uhp@gwu.edu](mailto:uhp@gwu.edu) as soon as possible so that our planning can be adjusted appropriately.

## **Stay Informed**

The Honors Program sends out a weekly e-newsletter, outlining important dates/deadlines, registration information, general program announcements, and events and opportunities for Honors students. It is your responsibility to make sure you are receiving the newsletter and to read it in full each week. All program deadlines (such as due dates for contract courses) will be strictly enforced. Please be in contact with a Program Manager well ahead of any due date if you will be in need of an extension.

You can also stay up to date with the Honors program by liking us on Facebook ([facebook.com/theUHP](https://facebook.com/theUHP)), following us on Twitter ([twitter.com/theUHP](https://twitter.com/theUHP)) or Instagram ([instagram.com/theuhp](https://instagram.com/theuhp)), and reading our blog (<https://blogs.gwu.edu/honorsprogram/>).

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