

HONORS PROGRAM

(413) 662-5381

www.mcla.edu/honr (<http://www.mcla.edu/honr/>)

Co-Director: Hannah Haynes, Ph.D. (Sabbatical spring 2025)

Email: Hannah.Haynes@mcla.edu

Co-Director: Mohamad Junaid, Ph.D. (Sabbatical spring 2025)

Email: Mohamad.Junaid@mcla.edu

Co-Director for spring 2025 semester: Paul Nnodim, Ph.D.

Email: Paul.Nnodim@mcla.edu

Co-Director for spring 2025 semester: Victoria Papa, Ph.D.

Email: Victoria.Papa@mcla.edu

Program Overview

The honors program presents the opportunity for highly motivated students to enrich their academic studies with challenging interdisciplinary courses, independent research, and intensive intellectual engagement with their peers. Open to students in any academic major, those who complete the program earn the distinction of All College Honors upon graduation.

Honors Programs

- All College Honors Program (<https://catalog.mcla.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs-study/honors-program/all-college-honors-program/>)
- Commonwealth Scholar Program (<https://catalog.mcla.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs-study/honors-program/commonwealth-scholar-program/>)

Honors Courses

AMGT 235H Honors: Fundamentals of Arts and Culture

3 cr

Explores functional elements of arts and culture organizations with emphasis on strategic planning and organizations' fit in the arts ecosystem. An in-depth study of arts management focusing on topics including planning, organizational identity, environmental analysis, strategy development, marketing, human resources, financial planning, fundraising and control systems. Focus will be on the strategic management process and organizational innovation in the context of the contemporary arts environment.

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

AMGT 345H Honors: Community Arts Education

3 cr

Explores the work of artist educators in and out of school contexts; develops skills to identify learning objectives for their work; documents educational work; increases the potency of marketing and descriptive material.

Prerequisite: AMGT 130 or AMGT 235

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

ANTH 130H Honors: Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology

3 cr

Introduces students to the basic concepts, theories, and methodologies of sociocultural anthropology. Creates an awareness of the wide spectrum of cultural variation throughout the world. Demonstrates that through the study of anthropology, we may not only gain an understanding of "exotic" cultures, but also of our own sociocultural experience.

Attributes: Cross-Cultural and Social Justice (CCSJ), Core Self & Society (CSS), Honors Program (HONR)

ANTH 475H Honors: Religion and Ritual

3 cr

Introduces students to concepts and methods that anthropology employs to understand the phenomenon of religion as a complex social and experiential phenomenon. Approaches religion as deeply enmeshed within the broader cultural systems as well as a contested category for classifying varied systems of belief and ritual.

Prerequisite: ANTH 130, ANTH 130H, ANTH 240 and junior/senior status

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

BADM 440H Honors: Advanced Leadership

3 cr

Examines various topics in leadership studies, both current and historical. Emphasis will be placed on exploring and developing the student's personal leadership philosophy, style, and approach. Possible topics could include operational, strategic, and ethical considerations within today's dynamic social, corporate, and non-profit environment. Additional research component will be required of students taking this course for honors credit.

Prerequisite: Junior status

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

BIOL 327H Honors: Plants and Society

3 cr

Introduces students to the interactions between people and plants in cultures throughout the world. Topics to be discussed include the current and historical use of plants as food, fiber, fuel and medicine.

Prerequisite: Sophomore/junior/senior status

Attributes: Environmental Studies (ENVI), Honors Program (HONR)

BIOL 332H Honors: Bryology and Lichenology

4 cr

Provides skills in identification and knowledge of taxonomy, biology and ecology of bryophytes (mosses, liverworts, hornworts) and macrolichens, with focus on the taxa found in northeastern North America. Students will gain experience identifying these groups using hand-lenses and microscopes, dissections, and chemical testing, and will learn techniques for preparing a personal reference collection and specimens for museum-vouchered collections. Required laboratory; lab mostly outdoors.

Prerequisite: BIOL 160 or BIOL 235

Corequisite: BIOL 332LH

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

BIOL 361H Honors: Advanced Biochemistry

3 cr

Studies the chemical dynamics in living systems. Topics include enzymes mechanisms, metabolism and its regulation, and energy production and utilization.

Prerequisite: BIOL 360

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

EDUC 307H Honors: Queer Childhoods

3 cr

Explores queer theory in discussion with popular and scholarly ideas about childhood and development. We examine the lived experiences of intersectional queer children and families in a US context, with a particular focus on educational encounters. We also look more broadly at queer theories of development, and lean into children's and adolescent literature by and about LGBTQ+ individuals and communities as a legitimate source for understanding queer childhoods.

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

ENGL 151H Honors: Fundamentals of Literary Studies I: Reading and Imagination **3 cr**

Introduces students to the imaginative potentials of reading as a practice that transforms our understanding of the world. Students will learn the fundamental skills associated with the study of literature across multiple genres and from various cultural traditions, with attention paid to how the close reading of a text informs the creative act of interpretation.

Attributes: Core Creative Arts (CCA), Honors Program (HONR)

ENGL 153H Honors: Introduction to Visual Culture **3 cr**

Explores how our encounters with images profoundly impact our experiences of the world. Through an examination of diverse modes of visual expression, this course introduces students to key concepts of visual culture, including the social dynamics of representation, power structures of looking, and phenomena of spectacle.

Attributes: Core Creative Arts (CCA), Honors Program (HONR)

ENGL 341H Honors: Hybrid Poetics **3 cr**

Investigates a range of experimental literary texts that cross, blur, or recombine different modes and genres of writing, in order to invent new forms of expression. Students explore the porous borders between poetry and prose, the creative and the critical, the visual and the verbal, the oral and the written, the factual and the imaginative. In their own writing, students are invited to move between two types of writing, creative and analytical, that are ordinarily kept separate.

Prerequisite: ENGL 202 or ENGL 230 or ENGL 235

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

ENGL 368H Honors: The Age of Milton **3 cr**

Explores the works of John Milton in relation to the major intellectual and social currents of early modernity. Discussions and lectures focus on analyzing the literary, philosophical, and religious attitudes of the period, as well as their uncanny afterlives in the present. Readings include *Lycidas*, *Areopagitica*, and *Paradise Lost*.

Prerequisite: ENGL 152

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

ENGL 372H Honors: Arts of Medieval and Renaissance Britain **3 cr**

Explores medieval and Renaissance British literature, history and culture. The course includes a spring break travel component. During travel students contextualize literature with the cultural heritage experienced via visual arts architecture, music, theatre, dance, fashion, food, and landscapes and cityscapes of Britain. There are additional fees associated with the travel portion of this course that the student will be responsible for.

Prerequisite: ENGL 152, instructor approval

Attributes: Additional Fees Apply (FEE), Honors Program (HONR)

ENGL 393H Honors: Faulkner and the Global South **3 cr**

Explores the reciprocal resonances between the writing of white southern modernist, William Faulkner, and the diverse literatures coming out of the Global South. Examines the ways in which Global South writers use experimental poetics to continue Faulkner's project and tell the stories of colonialism from the neocolonial present.

Prerequisite: ENGL 152

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

ENGL 405H Honors: Creativity and Survival **3 cr**

Explores how creative pursuits can offer life-affirming counternarratives of recognition and resiliency. Students will study a range of 20th- and 21st-century art in literary, visual, and performative realms while examining the role of experimental art-making in the representation of systematic forms of trauma. Includes intersecting critical lenses - trauma studies, queer theory, critical race studies, and visual culture - as well as immersive, high-impact learning experiences.

Prerequisite: ENGL 152 and junior status

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR), Women Gender Sexuality Studies (WMST)

ENVI 150H Honors: Introduction to Environmental Systems **4 cr**

Provides an interdisciplinary foundation in the physical, chemical and biological principles of environmental science in order to explore earth's terrestrial, aquatic and atmospheric systems. Historical case studies illustrate political and ethical dimensions of environmental issues. Lab exercises familiarize you with the forest and freshwater environments of the northeast and how the scientific method is used to analyze and understand the relation between humans and the natural environment.

Corequisite: ENVI 150LH

Attributes: Core Science & Tech w/lab (CSTL), Environmental Studies (ENVI), Honors Program (HONR)

ENVI 152H Honors: Environmental Sustainability **4 cr**

Provides a foundation in the nature and properties of natural resources in the context of sustainable environmental management. Students will consider and apply the paradigm of social, environmental and economic sustainability to a variety of natural resource issues such as fossil fuels, renewable energy, wastewater, forestry and wildlife, land protection, food production, urbanization and solid waste and recycling.

Corequisite: ENVI 152LH

Attributes: Environmental Studies (ENVI), Honors Program (HONR)

ENVI 340H Honors: Environmental Law **3 cr**

Studies the development of American consciousness toward the environment throughout our nation's history, emphasizing the political, economic and social forces at work in the consequent creation of United States environmental law. This law will then be considered in detail through the examination of federal, state and local environmental protection legislation, regulations and related court decisions.

Prerequisite: Junior status

Attributes: Environmental Studies (ENVI), Honors Program (HONR)

HIST 125H Honors: World Regional Geography **3 cr**

Introduces theories, terms and past and contemporary topics in human geography, including how cultures are born and change, how groups of people organize themselves and their activities both spatially and politically, how patterns of activities emerge and change across time and space, and how we interact with our environments. Students in this course will explore demographic, economic, and social trends and issues across the globe in their geographic and historical context.

Attributes: Core Human Heritage (CHH), Honors Program (HONR)

HLTH 150H Honors: Introduction to Community and Public Health **3 cr**

Introduces the fields of Public Health, Health Education and Health Promotion. Topics will include the history of public health, health status, health care philosophy, health and wellness, chronic and infectious diseases, health-related behavior, health theories and program models. Students will learn to use library databases and write a review of health-related literature. A service learning component will allow students to establish projects and relationships that will benefit the community.

Attributes: Core Self & Society (CSS), Honors Program (HONR)

HLTH 200H Honors: Health Promotion and Planning 3 cr Introduces students to health promotion programs. Students will develop health education materials and teaching strategies for individuals and groups across the life span and in a variety of settings. Students will explore health behavior design theory, health education needs assessments, instructional strategies, learner characteristics, teaching materials and aids, learning environments, and evaluation methods. Attributes: Core Self & Society (CSS), Honors Program (HONR)	HONR 500 Independent Study in Honors 1-12 cr Open to juniors and seniors who desire to read widely in a given area or to study a specific topic in depth. Written reports and frequent conferences with the advisor are required. Prerequisite: Department approval Attributes: Honors Program (HONR) Repeatable: Maximum of 12 credits
HLTH 210H Honors: Human Growth and Development 3 cr Explores the life cycle from conception to death. Biological, sociological, and psychological perspectives will be examined and applied to everyday situations and social issues. Attributes: Core Self & Society (CSS), Honors Program (HONR)	HONR 550 Commonwealth Scholar Thesis Research 4 cr Independent research, writing, and editing of a Commonwealth Scholar thesis under the direction of a faculty sponsor and the director(s) of the honors program. Program of study and related disciplinary methodology to be approved in the semester before senior year, and culminating in a public presentation and defense of the thesis. This course is repeatable for a maximum of 8 credits. Prerequisite: Honors Program Director Approval Attributes: Honors Program (HONR) Repeatable: Maximum of 8 credits
HONR 100 The Nature of Human Nature 3 cr Explores the problematic notion of human nature employing the open-ended question-asking and interdisciplinary discussion which characterizes the Honors Program. The course ranges widely over philosophical, psychological, literary and anthropological texts, as well as works of art, which propose competing definitions for human nature. Students are asked first to understand and then to criticize each perspective in turn and finally to formulate their own understanding of human nature. Attributes: Core Human Heritage (CHH), Honors Program (HONR)	IDST 150H Honors: Introduction to Cross-Cultural and Social Justice 3 cr Opens up a perspective on cultural diversity in local and global contexts. Takes an interdisciplinary approach to consider how historically shaped intersections of race, class, gender, and ethnicity inform the contemporary and past experiences of individuals and groups in society. Considers social justice and (in)equality by studying themes such as racism; classism; migration; globalization and labor rights; human trafficking; Islamophobia; and environmental justice. Attributes: Core Human Heritage (CHH), Honors Program (HONR)
HONR 102 Topics in Honors 3 cr Explores designated intellectual topics employing the open-ended and interdisciplinary research and discussion methods which characterize the Honors Program. Provides an opportunity for critical examination at the honors level in various domains. Attributes: Honors Program (HONR) Repeatable: Unlimited Credits	IDST 251H Honors: Introduction to Urban Studies 3 cr Traces cities back to their origins and ends with the present day where urbanization is happening faster than ever. Following a chronological order, we will examine how global forces and local communities are intimately connected. The course draws from various academic disciplines and introduces students to basic concepts such as density, zoning, gentrification, and urban renewal. The goal is to help students become informed thinkers critical of urban designs and suburban lifestyle. Attributes: Core Self & Society (CSS), Honors Program (HONR)
HONR 201 Special Topics in Honors 3 cr Undertakes a concentrated study of an interdisciplinary subject to be determined by the honors director in consultation with the Honors Advisory Board. Attributes: Honors Program (HONR) Repeatable: Unlimited Credits	IDST 252H Honors: Introduction to Critical Ethnic Studies 3 cr Applies interdisciplinary critical race and ethnic studies approaches to investigate how society is culturally and institutionally constituted by ideas like race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, and nation. Attributes: Core Human Heritage (CHH), Honors Program (HONR)
HONR 210 Introduction to the Honors Program 1 cr Reading texts chosen by faculty and former students to inspire interdisciplinary research in the Commonwealth Honors Program. Introduces students to Honors faculty. Course lasts seven weeks. This course will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Prerequisite: Membership in Honors Program Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)	MATH 232H Honors: Introduction to Statistics 3 cr Examines descriptive statistics, probability, sampling theory and inferential statistics. Mathematics majors cannot use this course for credit towards their major. Attributes: Quantitative Reasoning (CMA), Honors Program (HONR)
HONR 301 Special Topics in Honors 3 cr Undertakes a concentrated study of an interdisciplinary subject to be determined by the honors director in consultation with the Honors Advisory Board. Attributes: Honors Program (HONR) Repeatable: Unlimited Credits	MATH 340H Honors: Graph Theory 3 cr Investigates definitions and examples of graphs, graph isomorphism, paths and circuits, connectivity, trees, planar graphs, Euler's formula, graph coloring, four and five color theorems and applications. Prerequisite: MATH 240 Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)
HONR 401 Special Topics in Honors 3 cr Undertakes a concentrated study of an interdisciplinary subject to be determined by the honors director in consultation with the Honors Advisory Board. Attributes: Honors Program (HONR) Repeatable: Unlimited Credits	

PHIL 120H Honors: Art and Philosophy**3 cr**

Adopts a philosophical approach to the experience, understanding and critical assessment of the products and processes of the creative arts. Our inquiries will center on two traditional questions of aesthetic theory. What is art? What is art's special value? This course will be more theoretical than hands-on, though direct, continued experience in the various creative arts will be encouraged and figure prominently in most discussions and assignments.

Attributes: Core Creative Arts (CCA), Honors Program (HONR)

PHIL 200H Honors: Logic and Critical Reasoning**3 cr**

Examines and applies principles of cogent, sound or critical reasoning and writing, leading to a deeper understanding of language and of the use of logical argumentation. Considers, in the context of real-life arguments and claims (in the rhetoric of philosophy, history, and other disciplines) formal and informal principles of clear and systematic thinking and writing.

Attributes: Core Human Heritage (CHH), Honors Program (HONR)

PHIL 375H Honors: Ethics and Animals**3 cr**

Explores the potentially morally significant relationships between humans and various kinds of non-human animals. Explores moral propositions that we, as a society, subscribe to, to see whether they have unacknowledged implications for non-humans.

Prerequisite: Junior/senior status

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

PHIL 410H Honors: Constructing Reality**3 cr**

Focusing on the increasingly popular notion that human beings, individually or corporately, actively construct, in part or in whole, the world. This notion transcends disciplinary boundaries, finding expression in such diverse fields as biology, philosophy, psychology, physics, anthropology, sociology, mathematics, theology, literary theory, cybernetics and linguistics.

Prerequisite: A 100 or 200 level philosophy course

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

PHIL 500 Directed Independent Study**1-3 cr**

Open to juniors and seniors who wish to read in a given area or to study a topic in depth. Written reports and frequent conferences with the advisor are required.

Prerequisite: A 100-level and a 200-level philosophy course, junior/senior status, department approval

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

Repeatable: Maximum of 12 credits

POSC 302H Honors: Campaigns and Elections**3 cr**

Focuses on theories surrounding American campaigns and elections for presidential and congressional elections. In this course, we will analyze how the structures of the American political system have changed over time and how/why candidates run, win, and lose office. Further, we will explore the role American voters play in the political process and how their attitudes, opinions, and ideologies influence candidate choice and voting behavior.

Prerequisite: Junior/senior status or POSC 210

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

PSYC 208H Honors: Applied Developmental Psychology**3 cr**

Examines developmental theory and research from an applied perspective. Physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development from early childhood through adolescence will be covered with an emphasis on application.

Prerequisite: PSYC 100 or any Self and Society course,

Attributes: Honors Program (HONR)

SOCI 201H Honors: Social Problems**3 cr**

Studies problems and disorganization in modern industrial society such as: poverty, racism, sexism, environmental pollution, militarism, and family issues.

Attributes: Cross-Cultural and Social Justice (CCSJ), Core Self & Society (CSS), Honors Program (HONR)

SOCI 470H Honors: The Posthuman Child**3 cr**

Different iterations of posthumanity are examined to gain understanding of how child and youth posthumans relate to new, altered, or unaccepting societies and worlds. Drawing on posthuman and childhood studies theories, posthuman children and youth are contextualized by their positions as or relationships to various entities including aliens, animals, spirits, robots, vampires, witches, and clones.

Prerequisite: SOCI 100, junior/senior status

Attributes: Child & Family Studies Minor (C&FS), Honors Program (HONR), Women Gender Sexuality Studies (WMST)

SOCI 475H Honors: Children's Geographies**3 cr**

Studies how the importance of space, place, location, and time in the lived realities of children and youth contextualizes the environments they occupy. Children's and youth's constructions of and interactions with definitions of carework, home, family, neighborhood, emotions, bodies, nature, friendship, animals, and school are examined on the local and global scale.

Prerequisite: SOCI 100 and junior senior status

Attributes: Child & Family Studies Minor (C&FS), Honors Program (HONR), Women Gender Sexuality Studies (WMST)