

Honors & Scholars Program

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Faculty leading Honors-by-Contract, Honors & Scholars Project, and certain Honors courses vary from semester to semester.

Overview

The College of New Jersey Honors & Scholars Program (HSP) provides challenging and stimulating opportunities to students who seek to enhance their educational experience at TCNJ. The TCNJ HSP is not a departmental program; it is a community of scholars that serves undergraduate students in all majors in all schools of the college.

Students complete the requirements of the HSP by creating an individualized curriculum that includes several course options. Because most of these courses satisfy College Core, major, or minor requirements, completion of the HSP does not necessarily require students to take additional courses. Occasionally, Honors courses are team-taught by a pair of faculty members from different disciplines.

TCNJ's HSP is built on three Pillars that serve as the basis and scaffold the Honors experience through curricular and co-/extracurricular offerings at the College. Honors students and faculty are expected to be creative and innovative in achieving these goals.

- Depth: Challenging studies and experiences that promote deep thought and reflection.
- Integrative Ways of Thinking: Classes and experiences that develop holistic approaches to understanding complexity.
- Purposeful Commitment to the Community: Students take active leadership roles in classrooms, on campus, and beyond by applying their knowledge and passion to tackle big questions and issues.

The TCNJ HSP is administered by the Honors Program Director and The Honors and Scholars Council (HSC), of which the Director is a member. The HSC works with the Director to assess the Program's curriculum and policies, approve Honors course offerings, and provide recommendations related to the Program's events and awards.

Graduates of TCNJ's HSP receive special recognition on their transcripts.

Honors & Scholars Program Curriculum Requirements

1. Students must complete at least five units of Honors study. Transfer students who have successfully completed at least four units of Honors study at a previous institution must complete an additional three units of Honors study at TCNJ.
2. Students can earn the five units required for the HSP in several ways:
 - a. Honors & Scholars Project for a maximum of one unit. With approval from the Director of Honors & Scholars, students may count the project toward one of the five required units of the HSP. More information about the Honors Project can be found at <https://honors.tcnj.edu/honors-project/>. An Honors & Scholars Project, upon approval by the Director of Honors, may count toward one of the five units of Honors. More information about the Honors Project can be found at <https://honors.tcnj.edu/honors-project/>.
 - b. Honors-by-Contract (HBC) for a maximum of two units. HBCs allow students to complete non-honors courses for honors credit when the students and instructors agree to a set of enhancements that raise the course outcomes to the honors level. The Director of the HSP must approve these arrangements. More information on HBCs can be found at: <https://honors.tcnj.edu/honors-by-contract/>.
 - c. Study Abroad courses (.75 units and above) for a maximum of one honors unit. Courses may be during the academic year or the Winter or Summer sessions. Students must obtain approval from the Director of the HSP before the study begins.
 - d. Stand-alone Honors Courses for any number of units. All students in these courses are members of the HSP and conduct an enhanced course developed by the instructor.
 - e. Cross-listed Honors Courses for any number of units. Several HSP students conduct an enhanced version of a standard course developed by the instructor, along with students who are not members of the HSP and participate in the standard course.
 - f. H1 Sections for any number of units. Several HSP students and students who are not members of the HSP all conduct an enhanced version of a course developed by the instructor.
3. Students must have a 3.0 GPA or higher to join the HSP. They must maintain a 3.0 or higher GPA in both their Honors courses and cumulative GPA to graduate as an Honors & Scholars Program member.
4. Students who drop below a 3.0 Honors or cumulative GPA are strongly encouraged to meet with the Director of the Honors & Scholars Program to develop a plan to complete the program.

Admission Guidelines & Criteria

Any full-time TCNJ undergraduate student with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is eligible to apply for admission to TCNJ's HSP. First-year students may not apply in their first semester at

TCNJ. Transfer students or students with a full semester of college coursework before matriculation may apply in their first semester at TCNJ. Applications for admission must be submitted in the Fall or Spring semesters; there is no option to apply during Winter or Summer sessions. Students accepted into the Program begin in the semester following acceptance.

Process

Students who plan to submit an application for admission at the start of the Fall semester must submit this form no later than 4:00 p.m. on the first Friday of the preceding Spring semester. Students who plan to submit an application for admission at the start of the Spring semester must submit this form no later than 4:00 p.m. on the first Friday of the preceding Fall semester. Applicants must complete a Google Form that must contain all of the following items:

- A previous scholarly or creative work created by the student in a course at TCNJ or at a previous institution, if they are a transfer student. Examples include an essay, research paper, video, website, sheet music, original photographs or artwork, and mathematical work or problem sets. Submissions must be limited to 2,000 words, 5 minutes of video, or 10 pages for other types of submissions.
- An essay that explains how the scholarly or creative work reflects the pillars of the program and the types of experiences the student seeks through the Honors & Scholars Program.
- Letter of Recommendation from a college faculty member who is familiar with the student's work. [Click here](#) for the reference form. Faculty members should submit this form electronically by 4:00 p.m. on the first Friday of the semester during which the student will apply.
- Special instructions for first-semester transfer students: Transfer students applying in their first semester at TCNJ may submit a scholarly or creative work from their previous institution and have as their recommender a faculty member from that institution.

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by the Director of the HSP, in consultation with 3-4 members of the HSP faculty. Students will be notified of the result of their application no later than 4:00 p.m. on Oct. 15th (for applications submitted at the start of the Fall semester) or March 15th (for applications submitted at the start of the Spring semester).

Students denied admission into the Honors & Scholars Program may reapply; however, a student may apply for admission no more than twice. Students can begin taking Honors & Scholars courses in the semester following their admission to the program and must complete their first and second courses in the program in their first and second years, respectively, in the program.