

HONORS PROGRAM

University Honors Program

The University Honors Program fosters the needs, interests and talents of our most intellectually curious and academically committed students. This interdisciplinary program aims to foster a strong sense of community, and is founded on core values of intellectual curiosity, academic leadership, community engagement, and human rights.

The Honors Program provides a lively and thoughtful environment for intellectual curiosity and academic leadership through sophisticated coursework, extraordinary Signature Experiences, and global and intercultural interaction, all supported by the broader community ethic of giving back. The Honors Program identifies exceptional students, immerses them in a learning community where they can examine who they are and practice who they want to become, provides them with opportunities for growth and transformation, and develops them as reflective citizen-scholars ready for socially responsible leadership in their communities and professions.

The Quinnipiac University Honors Program is committed to offering students an individualized, student-centered approach to a meaningful undergraduate learning experience. Students are able to select their Honors courses and Signature Experiences from a broad menu of topics and disciplines. In their final undergraduate year, they are able to build an interdisciplinary Senior Capstone project, rooted in their home major discipline.

To that end, we are dedicated to:

- Promoting activities that lead students to discover their passions and enhance their gifts and talents.
- Coaching students to purposefully engage in interdisciplinary, experiential learning opportunities, and to reflect on how they can maximize and integrate their learning.
- Fostering a community that prioritizes transformational personal development, civic participation, and global responsibility.

Each year, the Honors Program welcomes incoming first-year students with strong academic records, intellectual curiosity and a hunger to experience a different kind of academic program beyond their major. Entry to the program is either through invitation on your letter of acceptance to Quinnipiac University or by application on the Quinnipiac Honors Program webpage (<https://www.qu.edu/academics/about-our-programs/honors-program/>). Students who have received their invitation to the Honors Program will need to respond with their acceptance by May 1, and will confirm their commitment to the Honors Program before June 1. Interested students may inquire with the Honors Program Directors or the admissions office at any time during the admissions process and into the summer.

Alternatively, students with strong records of achievement, and a demonstrated desire to share their intellectual curiosity and engagement with others, may apply to join the program at the end of their first semester at Quinnipiac.

Before applying or accepting an invitation to the Honors Program, students should understand what is expected.

Honors Program students are required to complete a minimum of 8 honors-level courses and program experiences during their Quinnipiac undergraduate career:

- **FYS 101H: First-Year Seminar.** Transfer students are required to take FYS 101H: First-Year Seminar during their first semester they arrive at Quinnipiac.
- **HON 400H: Honors Capstone.** Required for Honors Program students in their final year at Quinnipiac. Students will then present their research at the annual Honors Program Senior Capstone Conference.
- **Three elective Honors courses minimum.** Students complete 3 or more elective Honors courses. These courses also may satisfy requirements in the student's major, minor or general education (University Curriculum). These courses do not require additional academic assignments, but they may require supplementary field experiences, depending on the course substance. Honors courses are able to satisfy Honors Program requirements and other degree requirements at the same time. For example, the Directors recommend that students in their second semester satisfy their first-year university writing requirement by taking EN 102H "Academic Writing and Research" in their second semester.
- **Three Signature Experiences.** Students are required to complete a maximum of three Signature Experiences during their Quinnipiac career. Signature Experiences are short-term expert-guided experiences where students learn in the world outside their majors and outside the Quinnipiac campus and learn new skills for reading and interpreting places and communities as texts. They often take place in evenings, on weekends or during university breaks in order to minimize interference with student schedules. Students have choices of an array of Signature Experiences: explorations of the local natural environment; engagement with performing arts communities; learning about diverse cultural communities; engaging in community service learning opportunities; short-term educational seminars visiting world capitals. Signature Experiences are designed to be no additional cost to the student, or in some cases heavily subsidized by the Honors Program. Some recent examples of Signature Experiences include Connecticut Forum in Hartford, Long Wharf Theater in New Haven, New Haven as Text, Jazz Dance and the United Nations in New York City, "Inside Washington" Honors seminar for a week in January and multidisciplinary Spring Break study abroad seminars across the globe.
- **Every semester, Honors Program students are required to attend Honors Community Events in the program.** The Events are designed to build community and extend student learning. These may include student-led community discussions, expert speakers, community dinners, etc. In addition, students should plan to participate in the annual Honors Retreat, held in the fall and the weekend before the start of spring semester.

In addition to these requirements, students during the months prior to their first semester at Quinnipiac should cooperate with University Honors Directors to adjust their first semester schedule so they can begin taking some of their Honors courses and Signature Experiences during first year.

Answers to the two most common questions regarding the University Honors Program:

1. Is the balance of Honors requirements and other schoolwork difficult to maintain?

The Honors Program caters to students from a wide variety of majors and interests without adding undue stress or scheduling issues. The

courses that Honors students are required to take often overlap with courses required for general education, majors and minors. That way, Honors courses can meet Honors requirements and degree requirements simultaneously. Also, Signature Experience courses typically take place during an evening or a weekend or during spring break or January break, so as to minimize interference with student schedules.

2. Are Honors courses harder than regular courses?

While Honors courses are not necessarily more difficult, they challenge the intellect and offer a different learning experience. Honors courses encompass the same topics as other Quinnipiac courses, and the work required is more student-centered, interdisciplinary, discussion-based and focused on broader societal implications. Students have deeper learning experiences, a chance for challenging discussions, and opportunities for cultural engagement or community service. For most Honors Program students, these opportunities and intellectual challenges are motivating, and often lead students to achieve higher grades than they might have achieved in non-Honors courses.

For more details please see the Quinnipiac Honors Program webpage.