Honors Program Handbook

Department of English
Stony Brook University

2015-2016
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Program Requirements and Objectives

Objectives

The English Honors Program is a special track within the English major for gifted students with strong academic records. The program offers small class sizes (no more than 15-20 students in honors seminars), significant individual interaction with faculty, advanced level academic instruction, as well as the opportunity to participate in a service-learning program. The department’s objective in initiating an Honors program is to identify and mentor motivated, high-achieving students within the major and help develop their abilities in a targeted fashion. Honors students will receive a special mention on their diplomas at graduation; graduation with Honors in English signifies that the student maintained a GPA of 3.5 or above in the major throughout their undergraduate major, followed a careful program of honors courses and completed a capstone thesis project.

Requirements

1. All Honors students must complete all requirements for the English major, with the following additions:

   (a) take THREE honors seminars: EGL 491, 492, and one enhanced EGL 300-level course. See descriptions of these courses in section 2.

   (b) complete the Honors Practicum (EGL 494) with a grade of B+ or better. See descriptions of this course in section 3.

   (c) Write an Honors Thesis (EGL 496) under the direction of a faculty advisor. See descriptions of this course in section 3.

Please see Form A at the end of this handbook for a complete breakdown of how the Honors Program modifies and adheres to the requirements for the English major. Please note, Honors students will take the same number of credits as regular English majors with the addition of the Honors Practicum (3 extra credits).

2. In addition to the course sequence outlined above, all Honors students must maintain a GPA of 3.5 or above in the major in order to remain in good standing. All Honors students will be evaluated at the end of each semester to ensure they are in good standing. Should a student’s GPA slip below a 3.5, the student will be placed on probation for the following semester. If the student’s GPA does not improve to at least a 3.5 during this probationary period, he or she will be asked to drop out of the Honors program.

3. All Honors students must also maintain a cumulative overall GPA of at least 3.0 in order to remain in the Honors program. Should a student’s GPA slip below a 3.0, the student will be placed on probation for the following semester. If the student’s GPA does not improve to at least a 3.0 during this probationary period, he or she will be asked to drop out of the Honors program.
The Honors Seminars

All Honors students will take a sequence of three honors seminars: EGL 491, EGL 492, and one enhanced EGL 300-level course. These courses will be offered consecutively each semester and may be taken in any order.

(a) Enhanced EGL 300: This constitutes any 300-level EGL course except EGL 301. You will take the 300-level course for honors credit, which will entail additional work to be determined by the instructor at the beginning of the semester (typically more reading and / or writing and / or office hours conferences with the instructor).

(b) EGL 491: This is a topics course on English literature.

(c) EGL 492: This is a topics course in American or Anglophone literature.
The Honors Practicum

The Honors Practicum is geared to introduce students to proven methods for undertaking a 30-40 page argument-driven research paper. It is generally offered once per academic year in the Fall semester. Students should plan ideally on enrolling in their penultimate semester – the one immediately prior to the semester in which they write their thesis (and thus take EGL 496). In some cases, especially when a student plans on graduating in a Fall semester, it will be possible to take EGL 494 concurrently with EGL 496.
The Honors Thesis

The Honors Thesis (EGL 496) represents the capstone of the honors program. In this one-semester independent study course, students will write a 30-40 page thesis under the guidance of a faculty advisor on a subject of the student’s choice. The scope of the topic should be commensurate to the intended length of the thesis, that is, students should be careful about selecting a topic on which they can successfully research and write a thesis in a single semester.

Choosing an Advisor

Students are encouraged to select their advisor in consultation with the Honors Director, and are strongly urged to discuss this matter with the Honors Director and their potential faculty advisor in the semester before they will write thesis – i.e. they should aim to decide on an advisor in the spring if they will be writing their thesis in the fall. A good advisor is typically someone the student has already worked with and with whom the student has a good working relationship; or, someone who is an expert in the area of the student’s topic; or someone willing to work with the student to develop a topic in his or her area of expertise. A good mentoring relationship is crucial to the success of a thesis.

Forms and Deadlines

Students must submit Form B, which is required to gain permission to enroll for EGL 496 by the end of the first week of classes of the semester in which they plan to write the thesis. Please ensure that you complete all parts of the form and get the appropriate signatures. The completed thesis will be due on the last day of classes.

Evaluation

Honors Theses will be evaluated for a letter grade by the faculty advisor as well as a Second Reader. The student must identity a Second Reader, usually in consultation with the Honors Director and his or her faculty advisor when he or she enrolls for EGL 496. (Note that the Second Reader is also required to sign the form for permission to enroll). The student MUST be awarded a minimum of a B by both readers in order to graduate with Honors. In the event that there is a disagreement between the advisor and second reader about the thesis, the Honors Director will act as a third reader and determine the outcome.
Resources

Advising

All Honors Students are encouraged to meet with the Honors Director and the Undergraduate Advisor to keep track of their progress through the program. For the academic year 2015-16, please see:

Douglas Pfeiffer, Director of the Honors Program
Margaret Hanley, Undergraduate Advisor

Blackboard Site

The Honors Program has a Blackboard Site to which you will automatically be added upon admission to the Honors Program. Please make sure that your information in BB is current, so that you receive announcements, emails and other notifications

Joint Programs

Students may enroll in the Honors Program as well as the English Education Program. If you are interested in this option, please discuss this with the Honors Director. Students enrolled in the Honors College may also enroll in the Honors program; in this case, the year-long honors thesis required for the Honors College must be written in the English department and will count for Honors. All the rules for the Honors Thesis must be followed in addition to Honors College regulations.
Forms

Form A: English Major with Honors Advising Checklist
Form B: Permission to Enroll in EGL 496 (Honors Thesis)
Form C: Waiver for an Honors Seminar
ENGLISH MAJOR IN HONORS ADVISING CHECKLIST

NAME:_________________________________________

UNIVERSITY ID:________________________________

ADDRESS:_______________________________________

TRANSFER COLLEGE:____________________________

ENGLISH COURSES

EGL 204: Literary Analysis & Argumentation ________,
(Prerequisite to all EGL 300 level courses)

EGL 205: British Literature I ________,
EGL 207: The English Language ________,

Two of the Following

EGL 206: British Literature II, ________,
EGL 217: American Literature I ________,
EGL 218: American Literature II ________,

EGL 200 Level Elective: ________,

EGL 301: Intensive Writing Course ________,

One EGL 300 level Pre-1800, ________,

TWO Courses from EGL 300-399* ________, ________,
(No more than one course from 381 or 385 or 386 or 387 or WRT392)
(Excludes 440, 441, 449, 450-452, 454, 487, 488)

EGL 490 Honors Topics Course: SP 2012_________,
EGL 491: Honors British Literature: FA 2012_________,
EGL 492: Honors American Literature FA 2011_________, *EGL 494 or 495_________, (covers honors track only, does
…………………………………………………………………………………….not count for English major requirements)
EGL 496 Honors Senior Thesis ________,

Related Courses

Foreign Language: One year (6 Credits) at the Intermediate Level or beyond ________, ________,

History: 6 credits at the 200 level or above ________, ________,

EGL CREDITS: 45
NON-EGL CREDITS: 12
TOTAL CREDITS FOR HONORS ENGLISH MAJOR: 57

Overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 and a GPA of 3.5 in the major must be maintain
Name: ___________________________  USB ID: ___________________________

Email: ________________________________________________________________

Semester/Year: _______________________________________________________

Advisor: ___________________________________________________________________

Title of Project: ___________________________________________________________________

Project: A 30 to 40 page thesis, where the student works closely with a faculty member, meeting approximately once a week. Students may decide, along with their faculty advisers, to meet for longer sessions every two weeks instead. The project will be approved by the Honors Program Director.

(Please attach a 300 word abstract along with the bibliography to this page).

_________________________________________  Date
Student's Signature

_________________________________________  Date
Advisor's Signature

_________________________________________  Date
Second Reader

_________________________________________  Date
Honors Program Director