

**The
South
Carolina
Honors
College**

2006-2007

HANDBOOK

of Programs, Policies and Procedures For Students and Advisors

The University of South Carolina
Draft: August 24, 2006

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1. INTRODUCTION

The South Carolina Honors College enrolls some of the best students in the country, and the Honors College is committed to providing them with a firm foundation for their future achievements. Honors classes have limited enrollment, are populated by talented students, and are taught by faculty dedicated to designing courses that involve the students more actively in their own education. In addition to being part of a small “liberal arts college” setting, Honors College students have access to a comprehensive research university, with extensive scientific and scholarly resources, a diversity of programs and curricula, and a rich campus culture.

2. RETENTION IN THE COLLEGE

Students admitted to the Honors College are excellent students with very strong academic records. The College expects all Honors students to perform at a high academic level. The College also expects all Honors students to exhibit appropriate behavior in accordance with the Carolina Creed. The College articulates these expectations in terms of specific requirements for retention in the College.

- 2.1 Behavior:** The College expects students to behave in appropriate academic and civil ways. Students found violating the Carolina Creed may be dismissed from the College.
- 2.2 Grade Point Ratio:** The College expects students to maintain academic standards as measured by their grade point ratio. We use a sliding grade point ratio [GPR] scale (see Table 1 below) to determine whether a student is maintaining required academic standards.
- 2.3 Progress Toward Graduating with Honors:** The College expects students to make progress toward graduating with Honors. Graduating with Honors requires students to have taken a minimum of 45 Honors course credits. Students must demonstrate progress toward meeting this goal (see Table 1 below). Note “H-Option” and “honored” course credits (see sections 3.4 and 3.5 below) count towards meeting the minimum Honors course credit requirements. A grade of “C” or better is required to meet both this standard for retention in the College, and for an Honors College course credit to count toward graduation “with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College.”
- 2.4 Probation:** A student who either falls below the minimum GPR requirement or below the minimum Honors credit hour requirement will be allowed one probationary semester to raise his or her GPR and/or to earn more Honors course credits to meet these standards. During this time, a student will be allowed to take full advantage of all Honors College opportunities, such as Honors housing and Honors College courses. After the probationary semester, a student whose GPR and/or whose Honors course credits have been improved to meet the required standards will be returned to good standing in the College. However, if after a probationary semester, a student’s GPR or Honors course credits still do not meet these standards he or she will be dismissed from the College. A student may petition the College for relief from these requirements; for the appeal procedure, see section 6.6.

Because it is extremely unlikely, if not impossible, for a student in a single semester to pull up a GPR of less than 2.0, a student whose cumulative GPR falls below this point in either of his or her first two semesters will be dismissed from the College with no period of probation.

- 2.5 Progress Requirements:** By the end of the indicated semester in Table 1, Honors students must have a GPR at the level listed and have earned at least the number of Honors credits listed.

By end of semester	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth
GPR	3.0*	3.0*	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3
Honors Credits	0	9	9	18	18	27	27	36

Table 1

* A student is expected to earn a minimum GPR of 3.0. A student whose GPR falls below 2.0 in the first or second semester will be dismissed from the College without probation.

Δ A student must maintain a cumulative GPR of 3.3 in order to graduate “Honors from the South Carolina Honors College.”

° Graduating with “Honors from South Carolina Honors College” requires 45 credit hours; this can take more than eight semesters, and progress toward this goal requires the completion of 36 credit hours by the end of the eighth semester.

3. SOUTH CAROLINA HONORS COLLEGE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

3.1 Graduating with Honors: Honors College students have the opportunity to graduate with “Honors from the South Carolina Honors College” as part of their degree. To do so, a student must take courses across the spectrum of disciplines and must participate in a substantial, self-directed research paper/project. The University recognizes students who graduate with “Honors from the South Carolina Honors College” in the following ways:

- Special recognition at the University’s Commencement exercises;
- A special notation on the diploma: “graduated with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College;”
- A special diploma from the South Carolina Honors College
- A paragraph on their University transcripts about their graduation with “Honors from the South Carolina Honors College;”

“Graduation with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College indicates a fulfillment of rigorous requirements beyond the general degree. It testifies to a strong commitment to academic growth built on written and oral expression, intellectual analysis, and research skills.”

These requirements are summarized in Table 2.

Requirements for Graduating with “Honors from the South Carolina Honors College”		
Minimum cumulative GPR	3.3 at the end of student’s final semester	
Minimum letter grade	“C” or better for any Honors course to count toward graduation with Honors	
Minimum hours	45 Honors credit hours (69 credits for the Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae*)	
Distribution Requirements	At least 12 Honors courses in the following distribution	
Required Courses	Number	Notes (must have Honors credit)
English	2	English composition or literature
History of Civilization	2	Courses dealing with the history of civilization as listed in the SCHC course schedule
Humanities or Social Science	1	Art, Comparative Literature, English, Geography, History, Language, Philosophy, Religious Studies, and Women’s Studies
Social / Behavioral Sciences	1	Political Science, Economics, Sociology, Anthropology, and other courses as listed in the SCHC course schedule
Natural Science	2	Must be lab sciences
Analysis	1	Math, Logic, Statistics, CSCE, or additional Natural Science
Electives	4+	Any Honors courses / study abroad to complete the 45 credits
Senior Thesis	Credits	
390z	1	Senior Thesis preparation course usually in 6th semester
Thesis / Project	3-15	Usually register in 7th semester, complete in 8th

Table 2

*For the Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae, the SCHC degree, a total of 69 Honors credits is required and the Senior Thesis/Project must be a minimum of 9 credits.

3.2 The South Carolina Honors College Curriculum: South Carolina Honors College courses are designated either by the “SCCC” prefix [“South Carolina College Course”], or under the appropriate departmental prefix (e.g., “MATH,” “ENGL”). The SCCC prefix is used for courses designed specifically for the Honors College, and which have no direct equivalent in the regular University curriculum. Honors College versions of University courses are distinguished by section numbers beginning with the numeral 5 (e.g., 501, 502). A section number of “510” is used for an Honors College section within a larger, non-Honors course.

Students should bear in mind that the Honors College is not responsible for providing all the courses necessary to finish any particular discipline's major. The College provides courses that fulfill University distribution requirements and that enrich a student's academic experience. However, in several disciplines some advanced Honors College courses that contribute toward completion of that discipline's major are available.

With the approval of the appropriate dean or department chair, all Honors College courses may count toward group, area, major, minor, cognate, or elective requirements. Specific questions concerning equivalents should be directed to the SCHC office.

- 3.3** **Advanced Placement Credits:** The University of South Carolina accepts advanced standing credits earned in a variety of ways, including Advanced Placement [AP], International Baccalaureus [IB], College Level Examination Program [CLEP], and various departmental exams. The major department is responsible for transferring in the advanced placement and other college credits that appear on the transcript.
- 3.4** **Honorization:** Credits earned by advanced placement (IB, CLEP, etc.) tests are not by themselves "Honors" credits. However, they may be counted toward the total number of Honors credits required to graduate with Honors College—and toward the progression requirements for maintaining good standing in the College—by means of "honorization." In order to "honorize" advanced placement biology credits, for example, a student must earn a "B+" or better in an Honors College course in the same or related discipline. These Honors course credits "honorize" the advanced placement credits. In the same fashion, students transferring to the Honors College may honorize college-level work completed before entering the Honors College. Note: This policy reflects internal accounting only; "honored courses" are not so indicated on the student's transcript.

If a student enters the Honors College with 8 credit hours of lab science (e.g. through AP tests) the student may honorize one of their lab science courses with GEOG 202-501 (4 credits). GEOG 202 is accepted in the Honors College for honorization purposes only.

- 3.5** **Honors Option:** In unusual cases, a student may request Honors credit for a course that is not being offered by the Honors College. This is done by means of the "Honors Option," or "H-Option." An H-Option is based on a written contract between student and professor, and is subject to approval by the Honors College. The option is not available to freshmen, and usually cannot be exercised for courses regularly offered by the Honors College, for introductory courses, or in summer school. A student will be limited to no more than three H-Option courses in his or her undergraduate career, and usually no more than one in a semester.

H-Option work must be qualitatively superior to what usually would be expected in the normal—non-Honors—course. Simply a greater quantity of work (for example, a longer term paper or extra reading) does not constitute H-Option work.

The decision to exercise the H-Option in a course must be made prior to the last date to add a course according to the University calendar, and must be made in consultation with the student's Honors College advisor. Further information, model H-Options, and appropriate forms are available in the College office.

- 3.6** **Pass/Fail and Audit:** Honors College courses cannot be taken Pass/Fail or for Audit unless the option is stated in the course description.
- 3.7** **Study Abroad:** In order to encourage study abroad, the Honors College will credit students with three Honors hours for summer programs and six Honors hours for each full-time semester study abroad program. These credits will count as Honors electives and may not usually be used to fulfill Honors distribution requirements. Honors credits earned abroad will be counted internally but will not be recorded on the student's transcript. Usually, students will not receive Honors credit for enrolling in a domestic exchange program unless they participate in that institution's Honors program.

- 3.8 Graduate Courses:** Honors College students who enroll in courses at the 500 or 600 level may receive Honors credit by completing the work required of the graduate students in the course. Students seeking Honors course credit in this way must arrange for this in advance with the professor of the course and must submit an H-Option form to their Honors College advisor. Students who complete a 700 level course will automatically receive Honors credit for the course.
- 3.9 Senior Thesis:** The Senior Thesis/Project is designed to be the culminating experience of a student's career in the South Carolina Honors College. As such, students are free to choose their thesis/project topics, and may, if they so desire, write a thesis or complete a project outside of their majors. The only exception to this rule applies to those students who are required by their major departments to write a thesis related to their major course of study; these students may choose to do a second senior thesis for the SCHC, but are not required to do so. Nevertheless, all students are required to submit a Senior Thesis or Project in order to graduate with "Honors from South Carolina Honors College." For more information about details and deadlines related to the thesis process please see the Senior Thesis/Project Handbook that is available on the South Carolina Honors College web site at <http://schc.sc.edu/students/StudThesis.html>.

Two special Honors College courses must be taken in order to complete the Senior Thesis/Project.

SCCC 390Z is designed to enable a student and his or her thesis director to work together to explore the student's topic and to define the parameters of the research for the Senior Thesis. The final product is a two to six page proposal that should outline the research methods and goals of the thesis or project. SCCC 390Z is a one credit-hour pass/fail course taken during the second eight week session of any given semester. Students are strongly encouraged to take this course during the second semester of their junior year.

Students who study abroad during the second semester of their junior year may exempt this course with the permission of their Honors College advisor. Students who exempt SCCC 390Z requirement must still complete at least 45 Honors credit-hours to graduate with "Honors from the South Carolina Honors College."

SCCC 499 is the two-semester course in which a student conducts the research/scholarship and completes the writing and work for his or her thesis or project. The Honors College recommends that students register for SCCC 499 in the fall of their senior year. The thesis/project would then be due by the end of the second semester of their senior year (usually by 5PM on graduation day). However, some students may elect to take SCCC 499 and complete the thesis in one semester. SCCC 499 must be taken for a minimum of three credits, but may be as many as 15 credits. (Note: Students writing a thesis for the Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae degree must take a minimum of nine SCCC 499 credits; see section 3.12 below.)

Some students may be required by their major departments to take a thesis course with the course designation of their major field of study (e.g. HIST 499, PSYC 499 etc). Students completing their theses or projects in this manner need not register for SCCC 499 as well. The Honors College will accept theses and projects taken under other departmental course designations for Honors course credit and to fulfill the thesis requirement to graduate "with Honors."

- 3.10 Senior Check:** To graduate with "Honors from the South Carolina Honors College" a student must do a Senior Check with an Honors College advisor prior to the end of his or her penultimate semester. This ensures that the student will have fulfilled all SCHC requirements by graduation. Failure to complete the Senior Check may result in failure to graduate with "Honors from the South Carolina Honors College." Initiating this check is the responsibility of the student.
- 3.11 Application for Graduation with Honors:** Students must submit an application for graduation with "Honors from the South Carolina Honors College" to the Honors College in the first month of the semester they intend to graduate. The application is available on its web site (<http://schc.sc.edu>).
- 3.12 Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae ~ The SCHC Degree:** The Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae ("Bachelor of Arts and Sciences," or "BARSC") is a unique and highly selective degree offered only

by the South Carolina Honors College. To graduate with a BARSC degree a student must earn 69 Honors credits, complete a Senior Thesis/Project of at least nine credits, and achieve a cumulative 3.5 GPR by the end of his or her senior year. Additional distribution requirements apply as well (see Table 3 below). Students must have a minimum cumulative 3.6 GPR to apply for admission to the BARSC degree program. Usually the BARSC application/admission process is carried out in a student's fourth semester, but the College recommends that students interested in pursuing this degree make an appointment to talk about their interest with the Dean during their first year.

The following steps should be taken by any student considering the BARSC degree:

1. The student should discuss the degree program with their Honors Advisor, and then with the Dean of the Honors College. Ideally this should be done during the student's first three semesters in the Honors College.
2. If the Dean approves the student to apply to the BARSC program, then the student must prepare a "Statement of Purpose" and submit it to the Dean and an Associate Dean for review. The Statement of Purpose should contain the following information:
 - a) The student's academic strengths and weaknesses;
 - b) The student's personal and professional goals, both long- and short-term;
 - c) The reasons why the student's academic and professional goals cannot be met through a standard degree program (for example, a double major).
3. The Statement of Purpose will be reviewed and revisions may be suggested by the Dean and/or Associate Dean.
4. The student must establish his or her BARSC Committee, which consists of (i) the Dean; (ii) one Associate Dean; and (iii) two faculty members invited by the student. The two faculty members should represent two of the disciplines to be pursued through the student's BARSC Program. The student's BARSC Committee should receive the student's Statement of Purpose in preparation for meeting to establish the student's program of study.
5. The student's BARSC Committee will then meet with the student once for an extended period of time (approximately two hours) to work out the specific program of study for that student.

Once the program of study has been worked out, the student will transfer to the BARSC degree program officially, with the Honors College Dean serving as his or her Honors College and major advisor.

The following are the BARSC degree requirements:

- Completion of the basic degree requirements of both the Division of Liberal Arts and the Division of Science and Mathematics in the College of Arts and Sciences, excluding duplications in requirements;
- A foreign language through at least one 300-level course;
- Mathematics through at least MATH 142, preferably as Honors College courses;
- One course of Computer Science 102 or higher;
- One Independent Study, SCCC 399, to prepare for the Senior Thesis/Project;
- A Senior Thesis/Project of at least nine but no more than 15 credits.

Aside from these requirements, the student, working with his or her Committee, designs an individualized curriculum that has no major, minor, or cognate, but reflects the student's interests and weaknesses, building on the former and strengthening the latter. The Senior Thesis/Project (9-15 credits) represents the student's effort to pull the strands of this unique educational opportunity together in an extended research/scholarly experience. A checklist of these requirements is available at the Honors College office.

Requirements for Graduating with the Baccalaureus Degree from the Honors College		
Minimum cumulative GPR to be admitted	3.6 at the end of 3rd semester	
Minimum cumulative GPR	3.5 at the end of the student's final semester	
Minimum letter grade	"C" or better for any Honors course to count toward Honors graduation	
Minimum hours	*69 Honors credits for the Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae	
Distribution Requirements	Number	Notes (may be non-Honors)
English	3	ENGL 101, ENGL 102 and one more literature course
History	3	HIST 101 or 102, HIST 111 or 112, and Non-Western History
Fine Arts	1	Philosophical Reasoning and Fine Arts
Philosophical Reasoning	1	Any Philosophy course other than PHIL 110, PHIL 111, & PHIL 511
Language		Foreign language through one 300-level course
Social / Behavioral Science	3	Political Science, Psychology, Economics, Sociology & Anthropology
Science	2	Must be lab sciences
Analysis	3	MATH 141, MATH 142, and CSCE 102 or above
Cultural Overlay	2	North American Studies (other than HIST 111 / 112) and course in culture of foreign language
Senior Thesis	Credits	
SCCC 399	3	Independent Study
SCCC 390z	1	Senior Thesis preparation course usually in 6th semester
Thesis / Project	9-15	Usually register 7th semester, complete in 8th semester

Table 3

* For the Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae, the SCHC degree, a total of 69 Honors credits is required and the Senior Thesis/Project must be a minimum of nine credits.

4. HONORS COLLEGE ADVISING

One of the most important benefits of being in the Honors College is the advising. All Honors College students are advised by special SCHC personnel whose primary purpose is to help Honors College students get the best education possible given each student's particular needs. After the first semester, the University will assign students an advisor in their major discipline. Honors College students, however, retain their Honors College advisor who helps Honors College students selecting appropriate Honors College courses, and who will help to insure progress towards graduating "with Honors." While Honors College advisors are familiar with major requirements, students also will need to consult with their major discipline advisor as well in order to insure progress toward graduation in that discipline.

To prepare for Honors College advising, a student should be familiar with his or her remaining Honors requirements and should have an idea of which Honors College courses he or she wants to take. The College provides course descriptions on its website (<http://schc.sc.edu>). These descriptions contain considerable information (class size, grading procedures, number of field trips, etc.) for most of the courses offered each semester. Students are expected to consult this material prior to meeting with their Honors College advisor. In addition, the Honors College keeps student evaluation files on each professor who has taught for the College in the recent past; these are available for review by all interested students.

In addition to regular semester course advising, students are encouraged to consult periodically with the College staff concerning their academic careers. This should be done at times other than regular course advising, when more time is available to College staff.

During all days when the University is in session, at least one member of the Honors College staff will serve as "Officer of the Day" ["OD"]. Students may drop into the administrative offices of the Honors College to see the OD during his or her posted hours without an appointment. Students with emergency problems may see the OD on a first come/first served basis. Otherwise, appointments must be made a day in advance to see Honors College staff outside the OD system.

5. COLLEGE REGULATIONS

- 5.1** General Regulations: South Carolina Honors College students are responsible for taking care of the following matters without prompting from the SCHC office. Failure to do so may result in the loss of certain privileges, or even in not graduating with “Honors from the South Carolina Honors College.”

Students must keep the Honors College office informed of any change in their address, phone number, e-mail address, or major. Without this information, the Honors College office cannot communicate important material to students.

It is also each student’s responsibility to check their University email address (student@mailbox.sc.edu) for any additional, special announcements the Honors College may need to send.

Students are expected to show initiative and find information about all relevant processes, such as advising, registration, and Senior Thesis/Project. This information is available on its website (<http://schc.sc.edu>). Students must initiate a Senior Check in their penultimate semester. All seniors must also complete the Senior Exit Survey.

The best way for students to stay informed about deadlines, requirements, and opportunities in the Honors College is to check the College’s website. Twice each month students will receive email reminders that the website has been updated with new announcements and information.

- 5.2** Participation Fee: In order to enhance the Honors College experience, a participation fee is assessed to each Honors College student in the fall and spring semesters. This fee allows the Honors College to fund a wide variety of activities for classes and individuals, including special courses, undergraduate research fellowships, field trips, etc. The fee is required for students enrolled in a four-year degree program; students participating in a degree program that requires enrollment for more than four years (such as Pharmacy) are only required to pay the fee for the first four years.
- 5.3** Withdrawing from the College: If a student chooses to withdraw from the Honors College, he or she must submit written notification of this decision to the Dean of the College. A student will not be readmitted to the College, except by approval of the Committee on Scholastic Standards and Petitions, after resigning from the College.
- 5.4** Appeals: A student who wishes to appeal any decision made by a staff member of the College may do so, first by taking their concern to either the Dean or an Associate Dean. If the student does not receive satisfaction at that level, an appeal may be made directly to the appropriate committee (see below, section 6.6). The College is small enough that individual cases can be heard and carefully weighed on their merits. Students are encouraged to voice their concerns and request special consideration under exceptional circumstances. Included on these committees are representatives from the College’s student body. South Carolina Honors College students are urged to play an active role in the curriculum planning and administration of the College.

6. COLLEGE ORGANIZATION

- 6.1** Dean: The Dean of the South Carolina Honors College is the chief administrator of the College and is responsible for all operations of the Honors College.
- 6.2** Associate Deans: The Associate Deans pay particular attention to program development and other Honors College initiatives, such as supporting undergraduate research. The Dean and Associate Deans all assist in developing the Honors course schedule and with academic advising.
- 6.3** Advisors: The College has several Academic Advisors whose primary responsibility is academic advising. These staff members also perform other functions, such as producing Honors College publications and electronic communications, coordinating alumni, academic and student affairs, and overseeing the Senior Thesis process.
- 6.4** Director of Information Technology: The Director of Information/Education Technology maintains and develops the College's information systems.
- 6.5** Office Support: Many questions and concerns can be handled by the South Carolina Honors College office staff. Questions concerning requirements, advising, scheduling and housing can usually be handled by the Coordinator for Student Services. Questions or concerns about financial matters, including reimbursements and other costs associated with College activities can usually be handled by the Business Manager.
- 6.6** College Committees: All aspects of the College's administration are subject to review by the South Carolina Honors College Policy Committee. Members of the Policy Committee are faculty and staff appointed annually by the University Provost. In addition, two students, appointed by the President of the Student Government Association, serve on the Policy Committee and the President of the Student Honors Council serves ex-officio. The Policy Committee meets periodically to advise the College about activities, procedures and policies of the College. The Policy Committee is charged with assisting the Dean in developing policies governing the College. The Policy Committee must approve all changes to the rules contained in this Handbook. In addition, the Dean may seek the advice of the Policy Committee on other matters pertaining to the general operations of the Honors College.

The Curriculum Committee reviews and approves all new SCCC courses offered by the College.

The Committee on Scholastic Standards and Petitions is authorized to act on petitions seeking relief from College academic regulations. Students should address written appeals concerning continuation or reinstatement in the College to this Committee.

The Committee on Academic Responsibility hears cases charging a violation of the Code of Student Academic Responsibility and imposes appropriate sanctions. This Committee deals mainly with questions regarding plagiarism or cheating.

The Committee on Academic Student Grievance hears cases charging a faculty member teaching in the College with a violation of the section "Teaching Responsibility" in the Faculty Manual and/or sections A and C under the title "In the Classroom" of the "Statement of Student's Rights and Freedoms Within the Academic Community" in the Carolina Community Handbook. The grievance may not extend to matters of grading student work where the substance of the complaint is the student's disagreement with the mark or grade placed on the work. Since most faculty and courses in the South Carolina Honors College are also part of the general University staff and curriculum, many of the cases may be referred to committees in the major colleges.

The Committee on Scholarships and Grants awards Research Fellowships, Senior Thesis Research Grants, and other awards in the College. The membership of this Committee consists of the Dean and Associate Deans, and other members as needed.

South Carolina Honors College Committees

The membership of each of these committees may be found below and at <http://schc.sc.edu/committees/>.

SCHC Curriculum Committee

Cathy Murphy
Thorne Compton
Michael Filaseta
Loren Knapp
Kevin Lewis

SCHC Committee on Scholastic Standards and Petitions

Mary Ellen O'Leary
Kevin Lewis
Chris Robinson
Leslie Jones
SCHC Student Council President
Davis Baird, ex officio

Committee on Academic Responsibility

Jim Burns and his appointees as cases arise

Committee on Academic Student Grievance

Jim Burns and his appointees as cases arise

Committee on Scholarships and Grants

Davis Baird
Leslie Jones
Jim Burns
Edward Munn Sanchez

South Carolina Honors College Policy Committee

Sally Boyd, Chair
Jim Burns, ex-officio
Tom Hughes
Michael Jinnette
Catherine Murphy
Chris Robinson
Loren Knapp
Mary Ellen O'Leary
Vince Van Brunt
Davis Baird, ex-officio
Leslie Jones, ex-officio
Edward Munn Sanchez, ex-officio
President, Student Honors Council
student representative
student representative

The South Carolina Honors College Policy Committee is a group of USC faculty and staff appointed annually by the University Provost, and two students appointed by the Student Government Association. In addition the President of the Student Honors Council serves ex-officio. The Policy Committee meets periodically to advise the College about activities, procedures and policies of the College.