

Department of Government & Politics Honors Program

Welcome

This is an informational outline discussing the benefits and requirements of the Government & Politics Departmental Honors Program. It is both a privilege and a responsibility to be a member of this program, and the University hopes you will find it a challenging and rewarding program.

Purpose

The aim of the Government & Politics Honors Program is to encourage students of outstanding abilities to accelerate their development and intellectual growth under the conditions of greater freedom, greater responsibility, and more individual supervision from their instructors. The program also seeks to provide a community within which students can meet one another and further develop their interests in political science and public affairs.

Advantages

As a member of the Government & Politics Honors Program, you will enjoy the following privileges:

1. You may take Honors courses which are seminars containing a maximum of 20 students.
2. You may negotiate waivers of departmental requirements for the degree with the Director of the Honors Program.
3. Seniors in the program, with the consent of the Director of the Honors Program and the instructor of the course, may register in graduate level courses for undergraduate credit.
4. You will have ample opportunity for discussion and personal relationships with Professors and other motivated Honors students.

In addition, after successful completion of the Honors Program, the student will receive, upon recommendation of the Director of the Honors Program, the Bachelor's Degree with "Honors" or "High Honors" in Government & Politics.

Admission

Two kinds of admissions procedures are used for the Departmental Honors Program. First, entering students who are members of the University Honors College who plan to major in Government & Politics will be accepted for admission upon request of the student.

Second, students who are not already members of the University Honors College may apply for admission by the end of their sophomore year, and earlier if possible. The general requirements for admission and retention in the program are a cumulative GPA of 3.7 in all Government & Politics courses and a 3.4 in all coursework.

Requirements

In addition to meeting the requirements of the University and the department in which you are enrolled, the Honors student must complete the following:

1. The normal requirements of the Department of Government & Politics, subject to the advantages listed above.
2. A substantial portion of Honors work within the major, including no fewer than two 3-credit Honors level courses, and two 3-credit Honors thesis courses, all offered by the Department of Government & Politics.
3. A senior thesis, to be completed under the guidance of a faculty member from GVPT. The thesis will begin with enrollment in GVPT 396 "Intro. to Honors Research," typically completed during the Spring of the Junior year, followed by GVPT 397 "Honors Research" in the Fall of the Senior year (note that it is also okay for students to complete the thesis during the fall and spring of their senior year). These courses consist of independent guided research and writing with a thesis advisor, agreed upon by the Director of the Honors Program and you!

The thesis should be submitted at least two weeks before classes end, at which time an oral examination of the thesis will be scheduled. This exam will be conducted before a three-member committee usually composed of the thesis advisor and two other faculty members agreed upon by the student and the thesis advisor.

Withdrawal

The Honors student may withdraw from the program at any time. You may, however, be required to withdraw from the program at the end of any semester upon determination of the Director of the Honors Program that your performance has been less than satisfactory. Ordinarily, the student will be dropped from the program if his or her overall GPA falls below 3.4 or if his or her GPA in Government & Politics coursework falls below 3.7. Should you drop out of the program or be dropped, you may be required to meet any departmental requirements that were waived.

Final Evaluation

The recommendation of the Bachelor's degree with "Honors" or "High Honors" in Government & Politics will depend upon the quality of the senior thesis and its defense in the oral examination. Unsatisfactory performance in either of these will result in the degree being awarded without honors for the departmental major.

Contact

Students interested in the Government & Politics Honors Program should contact the Director, Professor Scott Kastner, at skastner@umd.edu.