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 with in 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 Program who plan to major in Government & Politics will be accepted for admission upon request of the student. These students will generally be directed to take GVPT 100H and GVPT 170H, Honors seminars, which may be substituted for the standard GVPT gateway courses, in their first year.

Second, students who are not already members of the University Honors Program 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 3.6 in all Government & Politics courses and a 3.2 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 three 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. Students are advised, but not required, to take GVPT289H- a one-credit seminar taught by the Director, to generate topics and learn about research methodology in Political Science. Thereafter, a thesis will begin with enrollment in GVPT 396 “Intro. to Honors Research” during the Spring of the Junior year followed by GVPT 397 “Honors Research” in the Fall of the Senior year. This will be independent guided research and writing with a thesis advisor, agreed upon by the Director of the Honors Program and you!

The thesis must be submitted at least thirty days before the end of the student’s Fall senior semester, 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 3.2 or if his or her GPA in Government & Politics coursework falls below 3.6. 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 David Cunningham, at 3117 Chincoteague, dacunnin@umd.edu.