

**CONCORDIA COLLEGE
PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT**

HONORS PROGRAM

The Psychology Department's Honors program is designed for a select group of students wishing to complete an educational experience in psychology beyond the offered curriculum. Honors means that you have gone well beyond the usual standard of student performance and have excelled in some specific field. This program requires a student to engage in a guided research project, a program of readings, and meet and maintain certain standards.

Students who participate in this program will benefit in many ways. First, they will develop a greater appreciation for the science of psychology by conducting a research project that will be appropriate for presentation or publication. The project is seen as part of the capstone to your psychology major, a chance for you to integrate your knowledge and interests in a directed study. You will graduate with an honors degree in psychology upon completion of this program. The honors degree demonstrates to graduate schools or employers that you are a person who can take the initiative for your own learning.

The honors program is carried out during the student's junior and senior years. The junior year is seen as the application year while the senior year is referred to as the program year. The years are outlined in the remaining sections of this paper. If you have questions or are interested in applying to be a candidate for an honors degree, please contact your advisor or the department chairperson.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A PSYCHOLOGY HONORS DEGREE

1. Psychology major
2. GPA above 3.6
3. completion of a supervised research project
4. submission of the project to appropriate conference or journal
5. completion of senior year honors reading program

HONORS APPLICATION: THE JUNIOR YEAR

Phase I Application (Fall, Junior Year):

* Student is expected to have and maintain an overall GPA of 3.6 or higher.

* Student is expected to approach a Psychology Department faculty member and ask that member to serve as the mentor to the honors project. Typically, faculty will agree to supervise a project that is related to their area of expertise. Given faculty teaching, research, and committee schedules, or given the student's interest area, faculty may decline to serve as the faculty mentor for the project.

* Student must prepare a brief application statement providing a general description of the

research that will be pursued as part of the honors program. This description should present an outline of a proposed study and include some appropriate background literature. This should be developed in conjunction with a faculty member and should be signed by the student and the faculty mentor and should be given to the department chair. In addition, a cover letter should contain the following information.

- a. why the student wants to do this research
- b. a list of current and previous psychology classes

* Applicants are expected to have completed Research Methods (Psy 301) by the end of the fall semester, Junior year.

*This material should be submitted to the department chair by December 1.

The psychology department will review the applications and will pass students through Phase I based on GP A, coursework, research statement, and the agreement by a faculty mentor to work with the student. All applicants will be notified by January 10 whether they are accepted. The faculty mentor along with two other department faculty will serve as the evaluation committee for the project.

Phase II Application (Spring, Junior Year)

The student will be expected to work with their faculty mentor during the spring semester to formulate a formal research proposal. The formal research proposal, which will serve as the final application criteria, will be expected to:

- a. be completed in AP A format
- b. contain an introduction that will review relevant literature to
- c. contain a methods section detailing your study
- d. contain an analysis section outlining what statistical methods you will employ
- e. contain a bibliography
- f. be submitted to the department chairperson by the first Friday in March

These will be reviewed by the three-member evaluation committee who will meet, review the research proposal, and vote on whether to allow the student to continue in the honors program. The faculty may make recommendations in order to improve the research project. Notification of acceptance will be sent to the student no later than the last day of class in the spring semester. A student whose work is not regarded as appropriate for honors will not continue in the honors program.

HONORS PROGRAM: THE SENIOR YEAR

During their senior year, honors program participants will be expected to complete their research projects and participate in an honors reading program.

The research program: Honors students will be expected to work on their research program during their senior year under the direction of their faculty mentor. The final product reflecting the research program will be a manuscript completed in APA format. The paper is to be given to the faculty mentor by the first Friday in March during the student's senior year. The evaluation committee will review the manuscript and will vote on the paper's final acceptance. Recommendations for revisions may be provided and the student is expected to complete the revisions in time for review.

The project will also be submitted to a conference (e.g. Minnesota Undergraduate Research Conference, Red River Valley Research Conference) or an appropriate journal. If it is accepted by a conference, honors students are expected to deliver the work at the conference. Honors students are also expected to enroll in Senior Capstone (Dr. Bartz's section) during the Fall of their Senior year.

The reading program: Honors students will also be involved in a reading program. Students will be responsible for contacting three faculty and ask them to provide an honors reading. A list of faculty reading selections will be sent to Honors students during the first two weeks in September. These are typically book-length works that reflect some recent or classic work in psychology. The reading will be selected by the faculty and will reflect the faculty member's area of psychology. The student will be expected to discuss the work with the professor after completing the reading. At least two of the readings should be completed during the first semester, senior year. The student is to collect a signature from each faculty member on a note that attests that they have completed the reading and the three notes should be given to the faculty mentor when the final paper is submitted on the first Friday in March.

CONCLUSION

The department faculty will meet at the end of the academic year and will make a final determination on granting the honors degree based on the completion of all of the above criteria in an appropriate and timely manner.