

## Honors Student Handbook

### INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended to serve as an introduction to the Honors Program at Angelo State University. The primary purpose of the handbook is to help introduce Honors Program students to current policies and procedures within the Honors Program. All Honors students must abide by the current Honors Student Handbook regardless of date of entry into the program.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

The Honors Program Director is the student's first point of contact for the Honors Program. The Director's office is located in A304 of the third floor of the Porter Henderson Library. The Honors Lounge is also located on the third floor of the Porter Henderson Library (A303); students access the Honors Lounge by an activated student ID card.

#### Honors Program contact information

325-942-2722 (Phone)

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Program Director: [Shirley.Eoff@angelo.edu](mailto:Shirley.Eoff@angelo.edu)

Program Officer: [Nancy.Larson@angelo.edu](mailto:Nancy.Larson@angelo.edu)

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<http://www.angelo.edu/dept/honors/index.html>

### ORGANIZATION

The Honors Program Director reports directly to the Provost/Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. The Director administers the Honors Program and is responsible for assuring that the program maintains standards of excellence.

An Honors Council composed of Angelo State University faculty and/or staff members representing various colleges and support units and two Honors students assists the Director in the overall development of the Honors Program. The Honors Council serves as an advisory body to help formulate and review the policies, programs and procedures of the Honors Program. Members act as a sounding board for the Director and provide advice on issues ranging from curriculum development to student activities. A list of current Honors Council members and their email addresses is available at <http://www.angelo.edu/dept/honors/honorscouncil.html>.

### HONORS PHILOSOPHY

The Honors experience revolves around a collection of courses and extracurricular opportunities that are designed to enrich the education of high quality students who want to make the most of their university experience. At the heart of the program is a unique learning community of capable and intellectually curious students who seek breadth and depth in their education and commit to becoming well educated and well rounded students and citizens. The program challenges students to delve deeply into their academic studies, to explore the world that surrounds them, to develop their critical thinking and analytical skills, and to actively engage in

university and community life. Honors faculty commit to helping students maximize their intellectual and personal talents and to become true partners in the educational experience of Honors students.

## **MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS**

The Honors Program at Angelo State University is committed to providing intellectually curious and capable students with an enriched learning experience. It seeks to challenge and enhance the intellectual and personal development of each individual student.

The Honors Program provides students with the opportunity to:

- Partner with other students and faculty in a unique learning community
- Achieve a deeper understanding of course material
- Participate in cultural and intellectual events that will broaden their appreciation of the world that surrounds them
- Develop leadership qualities that will help them throughout their careers and personal lives
- Participate in undergraduate research opportunities
- Nurture an understanding and appreciation of the diverse needs of society and the value of community service in personal and intellectual development

## **BENEFITS OF BEING AN HONORS STUDENT**

Membership in the Honors Program brings several benefits beyond the intrinsic value of an enhanced learning community and an opportunity to broaden one's horizons. Benefits provided to honors students include:

- Generally smaller class sizes and access to some of the best faculty members on campus
- Direct interaction with and peer support from some of the best students on campus
- Special access to distinguished speakers who participate in the various lectureships that ASU sponsors
- Access to the Honors Lounge and designated residence hall spaces
- Early registration privileges
- Access to travel funds to present research at honors convocations
- Guidance in applying for competitive national scholarship opportunities such as Goldwater, Truman, or Jack Kent Cooke Scholarships
- Participation in Honors Program sponsored activities and events
- A Carry Forward Program for academic and career goal-setting as well as an opportunity to receive a composite letter of reference
- Opportunities for scholarships and financial support for special seminars and internships
- Opportunities to develop leadership skills through unique community service projects
- Access to special programs and/or admission criteria at the TTU Medical School and Law School and the ASU Physical Therapy program for eligible candidate

## TRANSCRIPT AND DIPLOMA DESIGNATIONS

In order to graduate with an Honors designation on their transcript, an Honors Program student must graduate with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 or higher and must satisfy the Honors Program curriculum that was in place the first semester of entry as an ASU undergraduate student. Exceptions to that curriculum are very rare, but may be approved at the Honors Program Director's discretion.

Option One and Option Two curriculum tracks, detailed on the program website at <http://www.angelo.edu/dept/honors/curriculum-new.html>, receive different transcript and diploma designations. On ASU transcripts, the Option One track is designated "Highest University Honors" and the Option Two track is designated "High University Honors." Similarly, Option One track diplomas include a Highest Honors emblem while Option Two track diplomas include a High Honors emblem. If a student participates in the Thesis Option, the thesis project title will be stated on their transcript.

## EXPECTATIONS OF HONORS STUDENTS

The benefits associated with entry into the Program carry commensurate responsibilities. In keeping with the Honors philosophy stated above, Honors students are expected to be inquisitive in their academic pursuits and to exhibit a strong-willed pursuit of academic excellence and good character. Program requirements are intended to assist students to excel in the classroom and to broaden their personal horizons. General expectations are provided below:

### a). University Policies

Honors students are expected to adhere to all requirements of the ASU Student Handbook, the ASU Academic Honor Code, and the Honors Student Handbook. Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code which may be found online at <http://www.angelo.edu/cstudent>.

### b). Academic Requirements and Procedures

Honors students are expected to meet (or exceed) the graduation and course requirements of the Honors Program and to fully comply with academic policies and procedures.

- **Honors Program Tracks**

The Honors Program curriculum tracks were developed with careful attention to degree requirements for every major on campus, making the Honors Program a viable option for all majors at ASU. The Honors Program currently offers three possible tracks for students: the Option One track, the Option Two track and the Great Plains Honors Council (GPHC)/National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) Community College Member track. Students are assigned to the various tracks based on the Honors Program Director's review of the scholastic credits earned prior to their entry into ASU. Also available is an Honors Thesis Option whereby students conduct a yearlong research or scholarly project.

- **Degree Planning and Advising**

Students will be required to complete a degree planning form during the semester that they are admitted into the program. Students are generally expected to finish their

freshman and sophomore courses in the Honors Program by the end of their third year at Angelo State University. Additionally, students must take Honors Program courses in the semester indicated on the degree planning form unless they receive written permission from the Honors Program Director. Any deviations from the degree plan must be reported immediately to the Honors Program Director, who will approve or deny the proposed change. Failure to follow degree planning forms may result in a student not receiving honors credit for a course or removal from the program.

It is the responsibility of Honors Program students to make sure that they do not enroll in regular sections of courses they agree to take as Honors sections. No exceptions will be provided for students who took a regular section of an Honors course designated on their Honors Program degree planning form while they were in the Honors Program. An updated version of Honors advising procedures may be found on the program website at <http://www.angelo.edu/dept/honors/documents.html>.

All Honors students are encouraged to take additional Honors courses beyond those required for their degree plan. Students admitted under the Option One curriculum track are generally expected to take at least one Honors Program course each long semester (Fall and Spring).

- **Academic Performance**

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 to retain full privileges in the program. If the cumulative GPA of an Honors Program student falls below 3.25, the student will be required to participate in the Honors Probation Program. Students on probation will still receive most of the rights and privileges provided to an Honors Program student, but will not be eligible for Honors Scholarships during the probationary period. First semester non-provisional freshman Honors Program students are generally given two long semesters to bring their cumulative GPA above 3.25, provided they fulfill all terms of the probation contract and make substantive academic progress during the first semester of probation. Non-provisional freshman students and continuing students are allowed one semester to bring their cumulative GPA above 3.25. If, after completion of the probationary period, the student's cumulative GPA remains below a 3.25, the student will be removed from the program.

Provisional students who do not achieve a 3.25 GPA in their first semester in the program are generally not offered probation and are removed from the program.

Students who fail to meet the GPA or Probation Program requirements stated above have the right to petition the Honors Program Director to remain in the program. At the Director's discretion, the student will either be informed of additional conditions for remaining in the program or be removed from the program.

- **Honors Course Attendance**

Excessive absences in any course taken for honors credit are unacceptable. Honors faculty are expected to report to the Director when an Honors student misses more than one equivalent week of lecture (3 days for MWF classes or 2 for TR classes) due to

unexcused absences. The student will be required to meet with the Honors Program Director to discuss attendance issues. A second unexcused absence following this meeting will result in removal from the program.

- **Courses by contract**

It is likely that a student in the Honors Program will have to take a course by Honors contract to satisfy one or more of the curriculum requirements in the Honors Program. A student who needs to take a course for Honors credit must initially contact the faculty member for permission to take their course by Honors contract. Students should not enroll in the course until they have contacted the professor, submitted an *Honors Course by Contract Proposal Form*, and received the Honors Program Director's approval. **This must be done by the end of the preceding semester.** The student should provide the professor with a copy of the *Taking a Course by Honors Contract*, found in the policies and forms section of the webpage at <http://www.angelo.edu/dept/honors/documents.html>. The student is responsible for ensuring that the faculty member submits the *Honors Program Course by Contract Agreement Form* **by the end of the second week of the semester.** For the student to receive Honors credit, the *Contract Completion Form* must be submitted at the conclusion of the contract.

- **Withdrawal from Honors Courses**

Honors students will only be able to drop an Honors course under the most extraordinary or extenuating circumstances and only when the drop is approved by the Honors Program Director. In order to withdraw from an Honors Course, the student must complete and submit an *Honors Course Drop Form*, meet with the Honors Program Director to fully explain any extenuating circumstances, and demonstrate that the student has made a good faith effort to fulfill the course requirements. If the withdrawal is allowed, the student must immediately file an updated degree planning form addressing how the student will replace the dropped class. In the case of a denial, the student may request a review by the Honors Council. This request must be submitted to the Director within one week of receipt of the decision. Appeals made after this time will be automatically denied.

In the case of multiple honors offerings for a given requirement (e.g. lab science), students are allowed to take a course from a different area to replace the dropped course. A student may, for example, be allowed to drop honors CHEM 1411 and take honors BIO 1480 or GEO 1402 in a subsequent semester. In the case of single honors offerings for a given requirement (e.g. HIST 1301, GOVT 2301), however, students will be required to take the same course in a subsequent semester.

### c.) **Program Participation**

Honors students are expected to become an integral part of the program and to take advantage of the various opportunities available. All students are expected to attend certain prescribed meetings and participate in some of the social and cultural activities available. As the number and types of activities available vary from year to year, students will be provided with specific requirements by the end of the second week of each semester. In addition, first-year students are required to participate in additional mentoring activities to ease the transition into Honors education.

#### **d). Personal conduct**

Angelo State University is making a very important investment in each Honors student. This investment includes special privileges and opportunities that are sometimes only available to students in the Honors Program. Students are expected to take responsibility for their personal actions as well as individual successes or failures inside and outside of the classroom. Honors students are expected to demonstrate proper conduct and behavior appropriate to an Honors Program. They should bring to their daily pursuits a sense of personal responsibility and good judgment and seriously consider and accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions. They are expected to address personal and academic problems immediately to ensure that they do not become overwhelming and negatively impact academic and personal development.

Students need to remain mindful that their actions reflect not only on themselves but on the Honors Program and the university as well. Any legal violation or any behavior that brings an Honors student or the Honors Program into a negative light may lead to restriction of Honors Program privileges or removal from the program.

#### **e.) Contact Information**

The ASU email address assigned to the student serves as the university's official means of communication; therefore, Honors Program students must check their ASU email on a regular basis and will be held responsible for any messages or program information missed as a result of failing to regularly check their university email.

Honors students must also maintain their current contact information both with the Honors Program and with the current student records system. This information should include **local address, local phone number, cell phone number, emergency phone number, permanent address, permanent phone number and email address**. Students who fail to maintain current contact information will be responsible for any notification or program information sent using their existing contact information.

## **LOUNGE POLICIES AND CONTRACT OF UNDERSTANDING**

The Honors Lounge is not only a communal space for Honors students but also a workplace for Honors Program staff and a public showcase for visitors and prospective students. Before Honors students can be cleared to use the Honors Lounge and receive other benefits associated with the program, they must sign a contract stating that they have read the Honors Student Handbook and they agree to abide by its requirements.

The current lounge policies are posted in the Honors Lounge and under the policies and forms section of the webpage at <http://www.angelo.edu/dept/honors/documents.html>. Any Honors student failing to meet posted lounge policies may have their lounge privileges restricted.

## **REMOVAL FROM THE HONORS PROGRAM**

Students may be removed from the Honors Program if they fail to meet the personal or academic obligations of Honors Program students stated in this handbook. Students reported for legal violations or violations of any university or program policy will be required to meet with the

Honors Program Director to discuss the matter. After this meeting, a decision will be made as to the student's status in the Honors Program. A student will have the opportunity to discuss any restrictions or removal recommendations with the Honors Program Director before the decision is finalized.

At the discretion of the Honors Program Director, a peer review board may be appointed to review the circumstances surrounding a student's particular actions. The peer review board will review the matter and make a preliminary recommendation to the Director. Any student facing removal from the Honors Program will be allowed to discuss this with the Honors Program Director, who will make a decision following the meeting.

Students that are restricted or removed from the Honors Program will receive notification in writing by letter and email. Students wishing to appeal the decision must request consideration by the Honors Council by the date specified in the notification communication. The appeal process will involve a meeting between the student, the Honors Council, and the Honors Program Director. In the event that the matter under review involves a member of the Honors Council, that Council member will not participate in the decision-making process. The Honors Program Director will make any tie-breaking decisions. In the event that the Director is the Council member in question, a temporary chair will convene the meeting and make any tie-breaker decisions.