



**UCDAVIS**

**University Honors Program**

Office of Undergraduate Education

**Student  
Handbook**

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**UC DAVIS**

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# Mission, Vision, & Values

## Mission

UHP facilitates student learning opportunities to amplify experiential knowledge and distinct histories; engage discourse and self-awareness; and reframe problems and solutions for a more equitable and just society.

## Vision

UHP offers a small, liberal arts college setting that engages critical thinking, affective learning, and interpersonal expression to encourage transformational agency. Our community seeks individual and group awareness and the tools to critique and provide solutions to systemic issues. We believe that this constructive ethos embodies tomorrow's leaders.

## Values

- **Agency/Leadership:** empower oneself and others to act intentionally and transform society.
  - **Research:** employ ideas, discoveries, or tools that inspire understanding and positive change.
  - **Service:** participate in activities of personal and public concern that foster a better future, strengthen communities, and address contemporary and enduring issues.
- **Inclusive Excellence:** infuse diversity into recruitment, curriculum, institutional structures, and practices that achieve accountability and excellence in learning.
  - **Community:** support the cultural wealth and academic experience of our honors members to best care for and understand individual and group perspectives.

*"I feel like choosing UC Davis and UHP was one of the best decisions I ever made. A lot of the program is very community-based. People aren't afraid to help each other out."*

- Vincent Basas, honors student pursuing a double major in Psychology and in Neurobiology, Physiology and Behavior

## Our History

The University Honors Program (UHP) dates back to 1969. Our founding began with the establishment of the Integrated Studies Program (ISP), which provided students who applied, a novel interdisciplinary and experiential learning pathway. Student participants were offered housing in a designated living-learning residence hall with associated program curriculum. Faculty mentoring and small, unique courses were a hallmark. In time the program became a mechanism to recruit prospective Regents Scholars. In 1996, the Davis Honors Challenge (DHC) was formed, with the intent to provide a greater access and opportunity to students through an on-campus application process. DHC utilized innovative seminars and faculty mentored honors contracts linked to existing courses.

In 2006, ISP was renamed Integrated Studies Honors Program (ISHP). Academic Senate encouraged greater administrative structure, clarity, and coordination with College based honors programs regarding ISHP and DHC. Overtime, these two semi-autonomous programs created fissures—faculty loyalty, student antagonism, course structure—related to bifurcated structure, which failed to fully advance an unified honors experience. By 2014, a University Honors Program (UHP) proposal was submitted to address inherent flaws, while increasing faculty participation and providing students with a four-year program that was transparent. Students from limited-income, first-generation, and underrepresented backgrounds were given greater consideration based on a holistic review to further advance equity and access. Today we remain a four-year program that offers small, experiential learning opportunities, a first-year living learning community for frosh students, and one that reflects the four undergraduate Colleges and diversity of the University. This honors foundation seeks to build community and opportunity, while becoming a national model of inclusive excellence befitting a world class, research intensive, land grant institution.



## Diversity Statement

Honors pursues diversity, equity and inclusive excellence. We recognize that the continuation of privilege for the sake of privilege is often coded (e.g., race, class, abilities) and embedded in honors as the highest-achieving students that reflects and reproduces social inequalities and contradictory interests. We focus on educational opportunities and talent development as primary objectives. Inclusion is a process towards better learning when students engage in diversity through compositional diversity (e.g., students, faculty, staff), service learning, a positive campus climate, and transformative curriculum that challenge hegemony. Social and academic systems are essential to increasing the talent pools that will lead to graduate and professional school enrollment and advance equity for a more just and vibrant society.

The University Honors Program promotes positive attitudes, perceptions and behaviors within our community. As diversity, equity, and inclusion serve as keystones to student development we value the unique backgrounds, histories, and lived experiences of our undergraduates. In support of this goal, we focus on four elements:

- **Compositional diversity:** reflect the campus undergraduate student population to foster cross-intersectional interactions through program initiatives that increase the physical presence of students, staff, and faculty from distinct groups.

- **Psychological dimensions:** consider individual views of group relations, institutional responses to inclusion, perceptions of discrimination or conflict, and attitudes held towards others from different backgrounds.
- **Behavioral dimensions:** examine the beliefs and perceptions of community members that influence our campus and program climate that are shaped by how frequently individuals interact with members of different groups, as well as the quality of intergroup relations.
- **Historical legacy:** assess inclusionary and exclusionary confluences that shape current program and campus dynamics (e.g., processes, curriculum, and decision making).

We understand our program’s culture and climate influences student outcomes. Therefore, we embrace diverse interactions in and outside of the honors classroom, residential hall, and co-curricular and extracurricular activities. We value the unique cultural assets that students bring with them to college and believe that achieving inclusive excellence requires addressing inequities, while fostering diversity.

## Objectives

UHP has three entry points: incoming first-years and transfers and on-campus admits. They share similar curriculum learning outcomes, but the requirements are adjusted to reflect the length of time a student has until graduation (e.g., two-years for transfers).

UHP provides participants with an enriched curricular and co-curricular experience. Departmental courses supports honors by offering small existing classes taught by experienced and award winning faculty, with the majority of options fulfilling general education and program requirements. Our approach to learning seeks to empower individuals and prepare them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change, by providing students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g., science,

culture, and society) as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. This framework helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings.

## GPA Expectations

UHP’s annual University of California (UC) GPA minimum is 3.25 to remain in good standing. The goal is for students to attain a UC GPA of 3.50 or greater; increasing opportunities to pursue faculty-mentored departmental thesis, attain scholarships, and graduate with high, higher, or highest honors (as is required in many majors). This benchmark also increases admissions to professional and graduate school and attainment of post-graduate fellowships.

The program reviews student academic outcomes quarterly and annually—the end of the Spring Quarter. Individuals who obtain a cumulative UC GPA minimum of 3.25 and complete their honors curriculum for the academic year, are eligible to receive transcript notation and continue their honors experience. Students who either fall below the 3.250 UC GPA threshold or do not complete a curriculum component for their respective year, may be eligible to appeal and remain in the program. More information about the appeal process can be found on page 28.

## Academic Integrity

UHP values each student’s ability to learn and expects each individual to review and adhere to the [UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct](#) regarding academic integrity. Any violation (e.g., plagiarism or other academic misconduct) may result in being released from the program depending on the severity of the infraction and the Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs rendered findings regarding referred infractions.



# UHP Benefits

## Advising

Honors academic advisors are assigned to either first- and second-year or third- and fourth-year students. This is an intentional measure to ensure participants receive specialized assistance throughout their academic journey:

- **The First- and Second-Year Advisor's** attention is on high school and on-campus recruitment and orientation, college transition, peer-peer mentorship, honors coursework, and community building.
- **The Third- and Fourth-Year Advisor's** focus is on transfer recruitment and orientation, honors contract and capstone coursework, graduate and career goals, and community building.

UHP advisors do not replace major advising whom have a deep understanding of your department curriculum requirements. Rather, they focus on honors curriculum while advising and referring to programs, resources, and individuals that augment your educational experience. They also serve as advocates that review and guide participant persistence and success.

## Library Privileges

UHP students can borrow most manuscripts for an entire quarter, exceeding the typical 4-week period for undergraduates. An honors student may borrow up to 300 items from the library at one time. For more information, click [here](#).

## Priority Registration

UHP students whom are active and in good program standing receive priority registration during the Fall, Winter, and Spring terms. This allows students to enroll in classes during the first day of registration each quarter regardless of your class standing, allowing honors students to select an optimal instructor, course, day, and times when developing a course schedule.

\* Incoming frosh and transfer students do not receive priority registration during orientation or summer session \*

## Special Events

UHP students are invited to attend special signature events from the Fall Barbeque Kick-Off to UHProm to Graduation Banquet. While others participate in the Association of Pacific Rim Universities Undergraduate Leaders' Program, Western Regional Honors Council Conference, or Undergraduate Research Conference to gain valuable leadership, presentation, and research skills. Campus partners also provide special opportunities to meet with guest speakers and performers from Billy Collins, former U.S. Poet Laureate to Terry Virts, NASA Astronaut to Symphony conductors.

## Transcript Notation

UHP transcript notations are awarded yearly based off the successful completion of the annual honors curriculum and cumulative UC GPA earned at the end of academic year. A maximum number of notations is based upon student entry point.

## Living-Learning Community

First-year honors students reside in a shared Living-Learning Community (LLC), [Currant Hall](#). The majority of frosh participants call this home for their inaugural year. Currant Hall provides residential hall amenities, specialized programs and events, weekly honors advising, and a close knit community of learners and friends to ease college transition. The LLC is centrally located between two dining commons and steps away from the honors program.



# First-Year Admission:

## *Four-Year Curriculum General Overview*

Incoming first-year students are invited to the program through the admission process. Selected participants that accept their honors offer during the Statement of Intent to Register (SIR) period, start their honors experience during their first Fall term. Students complete an honors four-year curriculum plan that overlays their degree requirements:

- **Year 1:** Three UHP Designated Courses, one course each quarter
- **Year 2:** Three UHP Designated Courses, one course each quarter
- **Year 3:** Community Service, Project and Research Preparation, Conduct & Communication Course
- **Year 4:** Signature Work







# First-Year Admission

## Four-Year Curriculum General Overview

### Year 1 and 2: UHP Designated Courses

Honors offers approximately 20 Designated Courses each quarter to select from. The majority of classes retain their department course codes (e.g., MAT, PHI, ENL) and numbers (e.g., 002A, 090, 165), allowing students to meet either General Education and/or major requirements. Both lower (numbers 001-099) and upper division (numbers 100-197) courses are offered. Lower division classes generally focus on broad topics and concepts, while and upper division options typically have a singular area of focus. *Designated Courses*, regardless of lower or upper status, are tailored to first- and second-year participants, class expectations and workload remains the same regardless of the option selected. Students are encouraged to choose courses of personal interest and embrace the small class opportunity.

*Designated Courses* are restricted to first- and second-year honors participants and have a faculty-student ratio of 1:25<sup>1</sup>. Faculty employ active-teaching strategies (e.g., small and large group discussions, group projects, essays, research activities, etc.) that may include special events. The majority of faculty who teach are tenured track, experts in their field, and look forward to mentoring students. This approach is distinct from introductory courses that may range from 80 to 500+ students, utilize graduate

students, and prioritize a lecture style approach. Designated Courses provide students a small, enriched interdisciplinary learning environment that allows for intentional peer-peer and faculty-student interaction and engagement. UHP students are strongly encouraged to inform their major advisor<sup>2</sup> that they are an honors participant, which allows the two of you to plan for any curriculum changes or future departmental requirements regarding your senior thesis or project course. Developing a long-range academic plan is helpful to remain on track and attain personal goals.

### Course Selection & Registration

- **Year 1, Fall Course Selection:** The First- and Second-Year Advisor will share the list of Designated Courses with the incoming cohort in advance of registration. In consultation with the advisor, a student will select and enroll in one honors class for the Fall term.
- **Year 1, Winter & Spring Course Selection:** Designated course options are shared with students approximately three weeks before their enrollment time, participants—via survey—rank their top selections, and are notified of their assigned honors class a week prior to registration, allowing time to select major and degree requirements to build into their academic schedule.

<sup>1</sup> Few classes exceed this ratio (e.g., Calculus, Biology) or grant non-honors students permission to enroll in *Designated Courses*

<sup>2</sup> If in College of Biological Sciences, an advisor in the Dean's Office/  
Biological Academic Success Center (BASC).

- **Year 2, Fall, Winter, & Spring Course Selection:** See Year 1, Winter & Spring Course Selection above as a similar pattern is followed. Students may substitute a Designated Course for an Honors Contract, which develops a faculty mentored class linked to previously completed honors class. Speak with UHP First- and Second-Year Advisor a quarter in advance and visit the [Honors Contract website](#) for more details.

*\* UHP students who plan to graduate in three years, must meet with the First- and Second-Year Advisor early to discuss curriculum adjustments \**

## Year 3: Course, Community Service, & Project

UHP enhances student educational experience by providing flexible activities and projects centered on engagement. The curriculum includes: Signature Work preparation course, community service, and a project that assists honors participants as they progress toward their culminating senior thesis or project.

### Course - IST 94, Research Preparation, Conduct & Communication

Honors participants complete a 1-unit, Signature Work Preparation Course (IST 94) by the end of their third-year. This class allows students an opportunity to explore research topics of interest to them, learn how to navigate the research landscape, and catalyze their culminating Signature Work—senior thesis or project.

Students involved in research prior to their junior year are encouraged to enroll in the Signature Work Preparation Course regardless. Unlike laboratory experience that may allow students to apply theory and practice or theory and methods,

this course prepares undergraduates within the confines of the honors community, while discussing interdisciplinary approaches, examining inquiry pathways, crafting individual research question, and communicating results (e.g., presentation, written).

### Community Service (20 Hours)

Community service is an honors core value; it allows an individual to give back to society in meaningful ways. Volunteerism can be done in your hometown, on-campus, or internationally with a community agency, non-profit, student organization, etcetera. Ideally, students participate in a single project to best understand the social context and systemic barriers related to those served. We encourage students to strive for 20-hours per year to be an engaged global citizen. Our minimum requirement is 20-hours of service to be completed between the first day on campus and end of one's junior year to fulfil an honors third-year requirement.

### Project

Honors provides 7 project options to select from that assist students to explore their future academic and professional careers, while building transferable skills:

- **Honors Contract**
- **Individually Designed Project**
- **Project Management Course**
- **Center for Leadership Learning – Diversity Leadership Development Program**
- **Center for Leadership Learning – Student Leadership Development Program**
- **Washington Program**
- **Study Abroad**

*\* Full Project detail options are available in the next section of the handbook \**

UHP encourages students to discuss these options and to develop an appropriate timeline for completion with their honors advisor. Some options may be completed earlier (e.g., Study Abroad), but will require a curriculum modification to meet participant educational needs.

## Year 4: Signature Work

Honors students are required to complete a culminating experience—thesis or project—that integrates and applies knowledge to address a question or problem that is important to society and the students; with faculty guidance, undergraduates produce insights gained from the experience. Participants have 3 options:

- **Engineering Design Project**
- **Thesis in Major**
- **UHP Project/Thesis**

Honors students should reach out to their major advisor regarding options in their field of study as this will inform their future path forward. Not all disciplines offer a thesis or project opportunity, but knowing your choices helps to inform your conversations with an honors and major advisor (e.g., major or honors option). If Thesis in Major is available, this is the preferred selection for most students. Most engineering students are supported by the Engineering Design Project that meets the Signature Work requirement. Those whom do not have access to an Engineering Design Project or Thesis in Major or seek an interdisciplinary approach, should reach out to your honors advisor regarding UHP Project and Thesis opportunities.

Signature Work provides an opportunity to engage in purposeful and integrative learning practices. Some projects will be career related, others will be related to significant societal challenges such as health disparities, educational opportunities, sustainability, or human dignity that allows students to connect learning with the

world beyond. Signature Work typically consists of substantial writing, reflection on learning, visible results, and presentation of findings, even if preliminary.

## *Igniting Community Activism Through Student Leadership*



The University Honors Program encourages students to engage in leadership to foster lifelong skills and make an impact in our UC Davis communities and beyond.

Vannalee Cayabyab, Political Science and Spanish double major '19, exemplified student leadership throughout her undergraduate career at UC Davis, tracing back to her first year. Vannalee made her mark through her leadership roles in women's political leadership organization IGNITE, BRIDGE: Pilipinx Outreach and Retention, and even co-founding Pilipinx in Business and Law (PIBL). By finding intersections between her identities as a woman, Filipina, and Political Science major, she founded and created the different spaces to foster these passions. Vannalee developed as a leader, scholar activist, mentor, and so much more.

# On-Campus Admission:

## *Three-Year Curriculum General Overview*

First-year students who complete 12-units and earn a minimum UC GPA of 3.500 during the first Fall Quarter are invited to apply to the honors on-campus program via their UC Davis email in the proceeding term. Applicants are notified of their status during the Spring Quarter. Individuals selected begin their honors experience during their sophomore year and complete a three-year curriculum plan that overlays their degree requirements:

- **Year 2:** Three UHP Designated Courses, one course each quarter
- **Year 3:** Community Service, Project, and the Research, Communication & Preparation Course
- **Year 4:** Signature Work





# On-Campus Admission

## Three-Year Curriculum General Overview

### Year 2: UHP Designated Courses

Honors offers approximately 20 Designated Courses each quarter to select from. The majority of classes retain their department course codes (e.g., MAT, PHI, ENL) and numbers (e.g., 002A, 090, 165), allowing students to meet either General Education and/or major requirements. Both lower (numbers 001-099) and upper division (numbers 100-197) courses are offered. Lower division classes generally focus on broad topics and concepts, while and upper division options typically have a singular area of focus. Designated Courses, regardless of lower or upper status, are tailored to first- and second-year participants, class expectations and workload remains the same regardless of the option selected. Students are encouraged to choose courses of personal interest and embrace the small class opportunity.

Designated Courses are restricted to participating first- and second-year honors participants and have a faculty-student ratio of 1:25<sup>3</sup>. Faculty employ active-teaching strategies (e.g., small and large group discussions, group projects, essays, research activities, etc.) that may include special events. The majority of faculty who teach are tenured track, experts in their field, and look forward to mentoring students. This approach is distinct from introductory courses that may

range from 80 to 500+ students, utilize graduate students, and prioritize a lecture style approach. Designated Courses provide students a small, enriched interdisciplinary learning environment that allows for intentional peer-peer and faculty-student interaction and engagement.

UHP students are strongly encouraged to inform their major advisor<sup>4</sup> that they are an honors participant, which allows the two of you to plan for any curriculum changes or future departmental requirements regarding your senior thesis or project course. Developing a long-range academic plan is helpful to remain on track and attain personal goals.

### Course Selection & Registration

#### Year 2, Fall, Winter & Spring Course Selection:

Designated course options are shared with students approximately three weeks before their enrollment time, participants—via survey—rank their top selections, and are notified of their assigned honors class a week prior to registration, allowing time to select major and degree requirements to build into their academic schedule.

On-Campus Admits may substitute a Spring Designated Course for an Honors Contract, which develops a faculty mentored class linked

<sup>3</sup> Few classes exceed this ratio (e.g., Calculus, Biology) or grant non-honors students permission to enroll in *Designated Courses*

<sup>4</sup> If in College of Biological Sciences, an advisor in the Dean's Office/  
Biological Academic Success Center (BASC).

to previously completed honors class. Speak with UHP First- and Second-Year Advisor a quarter in advance and visit the [Honors Contract website](#) for more details.

## Year 3: Course, Community Service, & Project

UHP enhances student educational experience by providing flexible activities and projects centered on engagement. The curriculum includes: Signature Work preparation course, community service, and a project that assists honors participants as they progress toward their culminating senior thesis or project.

### Course - IST 94, Research Preparation, Conduct & Communication

Honors participants complete a 1-unit, Signature Work Preparation Course (IST 94) by the end of their third-year. This class allows students an opportunity to explore research topics of interest to them, learn how to navigate the research landscape, and catalyze their culminating Signature Work—senior thesis or project.

Students involved in research prior to their junior year are encouraged to enroll in the Signature Work Preparation Course regardless. Unlike laboratory experience that may allow students to apply theory and practice or theory and methods, this course prepares undergraduates within the confines of the honors community, while discussing interdisciplinary approaches, examining inquiry pathways, crafting individual research question, and communicating results (e.g., presentation, written).

## Honors Student Reflections on the Power of Volunteer Service

One of the core values of the University Honors Program is service. Honors students exemplify service through a wide variety of opportunities; students give back through local community service, global projects, academic research, and service in conjunction with career exploration.

*"I helped refugees transition to their new home country. I took them to the grocery store, helped enroll children in the local school system, took them to and from appointments, built beds and tables in their apartments before their arrival, and acted as [a] translator for those who only spoke Spanish. This service has showed me how important it is to be an advocate, especially for organizations that are non-profit and rely heavily on the donations. Because of this experience, I am now considering going to the Peace Corps before law school."*

*- Gabriel Eskandari, reflecting on volunteering with the International Rescue Committee, a non-profit organization in Sacramento*

## Community Service (20 Hours)

Community service is an honors core value; it allows an individual to give back to society in meaningful ways. Volunteerism can be done in your hometown, on-campus, or internationally with a community agency, non-profit, student organization, etcetera. Ideally, students participate in a single project to best understand the social context and systemic barriers related to those served. We encourage students to strive for 20-hours per year to be an engaged global citizen. Our minimum requirement is 20-hours of service to be completed between the first day on campus and end of one's junior year to fulfil an honors third-year requirement.

## Project

Honors provides 7 project options to select from that assist students to explore their future academic and professional careers, while building transferable skills:

- **Honors Contract**
- **Individually Designed Project**
- **Project Management Course**
- **Center for Leadership Learning – Diversity Leadership Development Program**
- **Center for Leadership Learning – Student Leadership Development Program**
- **Washington Program**
- **Study Abroad**

\* Full Project detail options are available in the next section of the handbook \*

UHP encourages students to discuss these options and to develop an appropriate timeline for completion with their honors advisor. Some options may be completed earlier (e.g., Study Abroad), but will require a curriculum modification to meet participant educational needs.

## Year 4: Signature Work

Honors students are required to complete a culminating experience—thesis or project—that integrates and applies knowledge to address a question or problem that is important to society and the students; with faculty guidance, undergraduates produce insights gained from the experience. Participants have 3 options:

- **Engineering Design Project**
- **Thesis in Major**
- **UHP Project/Thesis**

Honors students should reach out to their major advisor regarding options in their field of study as this will inform their future path forward. Not all disciplines offer a thesis or project opportunity, but knowing your choices helps to inform your conversations with an honors and major advisor (e.g., major or honors option). If Thesis in Major is available, this is the preferred selection for most students. Most engineering students are supported by the Engineering Design Project that meets the Signature Work requirement. Those whom do not have access to an Engineering Design Project or Thesis in Major or seek an interdisciplinary approach, should reach out to your honors advisor regarding UHP Project and Thesis opportunities.

Signature Work provides an opportunity to engage in purposeful and integrative learning practices. Some projects will be career related, others will be related to significant societal challenges such as health disparities, educational opportunities, sustainability, or human dignity that allows students to connect learning with the world beyond. Signature Work typically consists of substantial writing, reflection on learning, visible results, and presentation of findings, even if preliminary.



# Transfer Student Entry

## Two-Year Curriculum General Overview

Incoming transfer students are invited to the program through the admission process. Selected participants that accept their honors offer during the Statement of Intent to Register (SIR) period and start their honors experience during their first Fall term. Students complete an honors two-year curriculum plan that overlays their degree requirements:

- **Year 3:** UHP Transfer Seminar (Fall) and two Projects
- **Year 4:** Signature Work

### Year 3: Seminar & Two Projects

#### *Seminar*

In Fall, UHP transfer students enroll in the honors transfer seminar which is co-taught by a UC Davis faculty member and Third- and Fourth-Year Advisor. The seminar: Understanding the Research University, introduces incoming transfers to campus resources, opportunities, and avenues of pursuing their academic and career interests all while building community.

#### *Project Options*

For Winter and Spring Quarter, participants select one curriculum option per term to complete by

the end of the academic year. Honors provides 8 project options to select from that assist students to explore their future academic and professional careers, while building transferable skills:

- **Honors Contract**
- **Individually Designed Project**
- **Project Management Course**
- **Center for Leadership Learning – Diversity Leadership Development Program**
- **Center for Leadership Learning – Student Leadership Development Program**
- **Washington Program**
- **Study Abroad**
- **Research Preparation, Conduct & Communication Course, IST 94**

\* Full Project detail options are available in the next section of the handbook \*

Honors transfers may opt to complete a 1-unit, Signature Work Preparation Course (IST 94) in Winter or Spring to replace one project if they desire. This class allows students an opportunity to explore research topics of interest to them, learn how to navigate the research landscape, and catalyze their culminating Signature Work—senior thesis or project.

UHP encourages students to discuss these options early and to develop an appropriate timeline for completion with their honors advisor.



## Year 4: Signature Work

Honors students are required to complete a culminating experience—thesis or project—that integrates and applies knowledge to address a question or problem that is important to society and the students; with faculty guidance, undergraduates produce insights gained from the experience. Participants have 3 options:

- **Engineering Design Project**
- **Thesis in Major**
- **UHP Project/Thesis**

Honors students should reach out early to their major advisor regarding options in their field of study as this will inform their future path forward. Not all disciplines offer a thesis or project opportunity, but knowing your choices helps to inform your conversations with an honors and major advisor (e.g., major or honors option). If Thesis in Major is available, this is the preferred selection for most students. Most engineering students are supported by the Engineering Design Project that meets the Signature Work requirement. Those whom do not have access to an Engineering Design Project or Thesis in Major or seek an interdisciplinary approach, should reach out to your honors advisor regarding UHP Project and Thesis opportunities.

Signature Work provides an opportunity to engage in purposeful and integrative learning practices. Some projects will be career related, others will be related to significant societal challenges such as health disparities, educational opportunities, sustainability, or human dignity that allows students to connect learning with the world beyond. Signature Work typically consists of substantial writing, reflection on learning, visible results, and presentation of findings, even if preliminary.

### *Humanizing Health: Ryan Vinh's Service Project*



Through service projects, UHP students are able to add dimension to their UC Davis experience by applying classroom lessons to the larger community.

Ryan Vinh, 4th Year Neurobiology, Physiology and Behavior major, has been volunteering with Knights Landing (Knights Landing One Health Center is a clinic that serves Knights Landing, a small, rural town of less than 1000 people that is about 30 minutes north of Davis) since his 2nd year. Vinh explained that the holistic approach the clinic adopted is what sets them apart from other clinics. They work on community projects that relate to the environment, social interactions, and other demographics that impact public health.

*“Application is different from classroom learning. This experience makes everything we learn about in a classroom real.”*



# UHP Curriculum

## Details & Logistics | UHP Year 1 & 2

### UHP Year 1 & Year 2 Curriculum: First-Year & On-Campus Admit

#### UHP Designated Courses

Honors offers approximately 20 Designated Courses each quarter to select from.<sup>5</sup> They are restricted to first- and second-year honors participants and have a faculty-student ratio of 1:25. Class details via a digital course booklet are disseminated to participant @ucdavis.edu accounts approximately three weeks in advance of Pass 1 registration. This is followed by course survey that allows participants to rank their top five choices and the program to equitably distribute class assignments once the questionnaire closes.

On the next page is an excerpt that highlights the program importance of the course registration process.

#### First-Generation Honors Student Story: Jessica Ison



*"I specifically chose Davis because it's a great school for my major, one of the few schools to have this major, and the inclusiveness here is just so incredible. They are supportive of marginalized communities, including first generation students. In addition, I received a Jastro Scholarship and admission into their Honors program"*

*- Jessica Ison, Environmental Toxicology  
Class of '22*

<sup>3</sup> Few classes exceed this ratio (e.g., Calculus, Biology) or grant non-honors students permission to enroll in *Designated Courses*

<sup>4</sup> If in College of Biological Sciences, an advisor in the Dean's Office/  
Biological Academic Success Center (BASC).

## UHP Course Offering Descriptions (Quarter, Year)

These courses are restricted to honors students and can only be accessed using a Course **Registration Number (CRN) distributed by UHP**. You cannot search for them in Schedule Builder.

Please review the course descriptions below. You should select your top five classes. The course selection survey will be open {day}, {date} at {time} and close {day}, {date} at {time}. Course assignments will be sent via UC Davis email on {day}, {date}.

You can register for one UHP course during Pass 1 or Pass 2. Request for a second course cannot be made until {month}. Most honors courses are capped at 25 students each, except for {list of six courses} which are capped at {24, 20, 17, 30, 30, and 21}, respectively. Each UHP student must complete three UHP courses during the {year} academic year; taking a second course during {Quarter, year} does not waive a {year} academic year course requirement.

***UHP courses must be taken for a letter grade; course changed to P/NP grading will not count toward UHP requirements. All prerequisites listed in red text will not be waived for honors students.***

The digital booklet then lists the courses offered for the upcoming quarter. Here is an example of the course information included in the booklet with a recently offered course.

Example Course Details:

TITLE	TERM	SUBJ	CRSE	SEC	CREDITS
Museum in the Age of Spectacles	Fall	AHI	123	002	4.0

INSTRUCTOR(S)	TYPE	DAYS	TIME	BUILD	ROOM
Grigor, Talinn	Lecture	MW	2:10 PM – 4:00 PM	SHREM	1001

### **Description:**

Lecture/Discussion—4 hour(s). The institution of the museum in the context of modernity, nationalism, (post)colonialism, and the society of spectacle. Designed to bring art objects of the Manetti Shrem collection, global art history, and foundational critical theory together in a meaningful and experimental way. GE credit: AH.

The Honors course raises major themes related to the institution of the museum in the context of modernity, nationalism, (post)colonialism, and the society of spectacle. The course is the first UC Davis course situated, physically, in the new Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art and is, therefore, designed to bring art objects of the Manetti Shrem collection, global art history, and foundational critical theory together in a meaningful and experimental way. Throughout art historical, hands-on, and theoretical explorations, students will experience the direct ties between art objects, the museum, and the ideologies of modernity. The museum itself, as a work of contemporary architecture and museum practices, will be experienced and examined as a (post) colonial phenomenon.

**Title** – Name of the course

**Term** – Quarter the course is being offered (Fall, Winter, Spring)

**Subject (Subj)** – Major department instructing the course; AHI – Art History

**Course Number (CRSE)** – Number between 001-199, for undergraduate courses at UC Davis

**Section (SEC)** – Number indicating which section of the course is for UHP students

**Credits** – Number indicating the amount of time (hours) a student will be in class for the course, this is often referred to as units

**Instructor(s)** – Faculty member teaching the course

**Type** – Designation of how the course is being taught, types include: lecture, lab, seminar, discussion

**Days** – Days of the week the course is being taught in which the students attend class (M=Monday, T=Tuesday, W=Wednesday, R=Thursday, F=Friday; UHP does not offer courses on the weekend)

**Time** – Time of day the course is being taught

**Building (Build)** – Building where the course is being taught

**Room** – Room number in the building where the course is being taught

Within the course description students can find the information on which General Education (GE) area and Core Literacies (CL) the course meets. For more information on GE and CL can be located on the General Education website. Honors courses may have the prerequisites modified (reduced) or waived, dependent upon

instructor consent; enforced prerequisites are noted in red in the course description booklet. Designated Course with relinquished course prerequisites, may still require students to complete the prerequisite petition online.

Students must participate in the honors course survey in order to receive a Designated Course for the upcoming quarter. In the questionnaire, students rank their top 5 choices. Once the survey closes the program equitably distribute class assignments within 3 days—the majority of students receive their first or second choice.

Participating first- and second-years must complete one honors course per quarter for a letter grade. Students may pursue two courses in one quarter after a makeup survey has been administered and dependent upon seats available, but this does not exempt a student from a future course in the following quarters or academic year.

Prior to Pass 2, the program will send all first- and second-year students a Course Adjustment Survey. This survey is optional and allows students to request a course swap or second course for the term. Survey participants will be informed of the result prior to Pass 2 registration.

When students are provided a Designated Course CRN, it may not be shared with another person. If a participant is provided a new CRN due to a course change, the student must drop the first course and not use the original CRN as a “back up” to ensure fair enrollment practices.

## ***UHP Canvas Portal***

During Spring Break, Year 2 curriculum participants will be added to UHP’s Canvas portal. This is a website for UC Davis faculty and programs to organize course resources and allow students to submit their assignments. UHP students will have Canvas assignments for the Year 3 and 4 curriculum.



# UHP Curriculum

## Details & Logistics | UHP Year 3

### UHP Year 3 Curriculum

The Year 3 curriculum includes three required components that are to be completed in full by the last day of Spring instruction. UHP's Canvas Portal contains an advising syllabi, which a student can access as frequently as needed. This resource contains important information in the 'Files' area of the portal. Once a project is completed, it is removed from the individual's task list.

#### ***I. Research Preparation, Conduct & Communication Course, IST 94***

- **Required for first-year and on-campus admits as a third-year component**
- **Optional for transfers as a third-year component**

The course prepares students to explore potential research interests, navigate the research university, and build a solid foundation for senior Signature work. Three versions of the class are taught each year.

1. **Natural Sciences and Engineering:** Offered during Fall

2. **Social Science, Arts, and Humanities:** Offered during Winter
3. **Interdisciplinary:** Offered in Spring.

The Signature Work Preparation Course is a required Year 3 curriculum component for all students regardless of experience; transfer optional.

#### ***Ia. Transfer Seminar, HNR 198***

**Required for transfer students during their first quarter at the university.**

The fall course is a requirement of new transfer students. This honors seminar—HNR 198—is designed to aid undergraduate academic and sociocultural success by offering some tools to thrive in and out of the classroom. A common book and/or reader is assigned to better understand the intent of a college education, campus resources and academic strategies, cultural wealth, while expanding your social network with the professor and guest speakers and developing your interpersonal communication skills.

<sup>3</sup> Few classes exceed this ratio (e.g., Calculus, Biology) or grant non-honors students permission to enroll in *Designated Courses*

<sup>4</sup> If in College of Biological Sciences, an advisor in the Dean's Office/  
Biological Academic Success Center (BASC).

## II. Community Service

- **Required for first-year and on-campus admits as a third-year component**
- **Project option for transfers**

Service provides an opportunity to apply your knowledge, learn from others, develop empathy and compassion, and act as a global citizen. Service that combines those elements can also foster future career paths. The program desires that each student select a community of their choice to whom they wish to make a contribution.

Students complete a minimum of 20-hours of service to be completed between the first day on campus and end of one's junior year to fulfil an honors third-year requirement. Previous volunteer time will not count towards this total. We strongly suggest the time rendered be with one organization or project to gain increased breadth and depth.

\* For students in UHP's Project Management Course or the Center for Leadership Learning's Student Leadership Development Program, those options satisfy the Project and Community Service requirements\*

## III. Project Activity

- **First-year and on-campus admits select 1 project from the list below to be completed in the third-year**
- **Transfers select 2 projects from the list below, which may include community service or Signature Work Preparation course above to be completed in the third-year**

Projects allow participants to explore academic content and professional careers through self-selected course material, research, internship, leadership, and travel abroad. Select options that benefit your current and future trajectory

and discuss them with your honors advisor to maximize your learning opportunities.

Projects include:

1. **Honors Contract:** A 1-unit, letter-graded, upper division course (HNR 190X) that allows a student to create a custom honors course with a previous or current instructor of an upper division class that they were or are enrolled. This project course enriches and deepens the academic experience through one-on-one mentorship. The end product spans research projects to literature reviews to works of art. For additional details on an Honors Contract and to review the proposal form, click [here](#).
2. **Individually Designed Project (IDP):** Requires that the student engage in career-related, creative, or scholarly pursuits. This hands-on, applied learning opportunity ranges from internships to service-learning to laboratories, which extend beyond the classroom. Students may already be involved in these activities (e.g., internships, research). Students do not have to create their own project in order to participate - the structure of the project or activity may already exist, such as an internship or research position. An IDP formalizes the pursuit and requires a minimum of 30 hours over one quarter. Examples of an IDP include: being a research assistant in a lab, a paid or unpaid internship, designing and implementing an activity or event and more. For additional details on an IDP and to review the proposal form, click [here](#).
3. **Project Management Course (PMC):** A 3-unit, letter-graded course (HNR 195), led by an instructor who guides students in a team based project. Participants develop real world experience in client relations, project design and planning, research, and service learning. For examples of previous projects, click [here](#).

\* PMC completion meets both the service and project requirement \*

4. **Center for Leadership Learning–Diversity Leadership Development Program (DLDP):** A 2-unit, pass/no pass seminar and certificate program over two quarters that seeks to provide a deeper understanding and appreciation of differences, and learn how to cultivate an inclusive environment in an organization or workplace. For more, click [here](#).

\* Students wishing to pursue this option must express interest in the program during Fall Quarter to be program eligible \*

5. **Center for Leadership Learning–Student Leadership Development Program (SLDP):** A 2-unit, pass/no pass seminar and certificate program over two quarters that seeks to put theory into action, test your communication and group work skills, and develop a deeper understanding of your personal leadership style. For more details, click [here](#).

\* SLDP completion meets both the service and project requirements. Completion of the Leadership Essentials Workshop Series—six topical workshops—is a prerequisite. Students wishing to pursue this option must express interest in the program during Fall Quarter to be program eligible \*

6. **Study Abroad:** The [UC Davis Study Abroad](#) office and the University of California Education Abroad Program ([UCEAP](#)) facilitate student studies, exploration, and engagement with other cultures that broaden perspective and involvement in the world. Other international opportunities outside of those noted are discussed in consultation with a UHP advisor to determine applicability.

\* Study abroad experiences must be a minimum of four-weeks \*

7. **Washington Program:** An opportunity to combine course work, exciting field research and unparalleled internship experience (e.g., NASA, National Institutes of Health, Smithsonian, Capitol) during a quarter’s residence in our nation’s capital. Students have the chance to test-drive a career, build their portfolio or resume, and make valuable industry contacts that can be essential to landing the ideal job upon graduation. For more details, click [here](#).

*“There are endless networking opportunities within UHP, and we have a really great advising team. You don’t come into college knowing how to navigate college. UHP provides the support necessary to allow people to become the best versions of themselves by the time they graduate.”*

- Allie O’Brien, honors student pursuing a double major in Sociology and Political Science



# UHP Curriculum

## Details & Logistics | UHP Year 4

### Signature Work: All UHP Students

Year 4 curriculum centers on a culminating capstone experience the program refer to as Signature Work. A student takes the lead to complete a credit bearing thesis or project that examines a central question or issue, involves ample writing, and a public presentation of findings. This endeavor involves purposeful faculty mentorship and staff, peer and/or community engagement.

Honors students should reach out early to their major advisor regarding options in their field of study as this will inform their future path forward. Not all disciplines offer a thesis or project opportunity or follow shared requirements (e.g., GPA, prerequisites, honors designation). This will help to ensure adequate planning with your major and honors advisor.

UHP students have 3 Signature Work options:

- **Engineering Design Project**
- **Thesis in Major**
- **UHP Thesis/Project**

Most honors students complete a Thesis in Major and Engineers the Engineering Design Project for their Signature Work. If these two options

are unavailable or do not meet your educational goals, participants may pursue UHP Thesis/Project—make an appointment with the Third-and-Fourth-Year (Honors) Advisor for more details.

Signature Work completion involves 4 activities:

1. **Signature Work enrollment and completion with a passing grade**
2. **Conference presentation of the Signature Work (even if preliminary)**
3. **Signature Work thesis/project uploaded to UHP Canvas Portal**
4. **Senior Survey**

Signature Work types in more detail below.

### I. Engineering Design Project

Many College of Engineering students and some Letters and Science Computer Science undergraduates participate in the Engineering Design Project as a culminating Signature Work. Small groups of student teams work on projects during the two-quarter (Fall/Winter or Winter/Spring) senior capstone course, as they collaborate on the project, attend lectures, meet weekly with a faculty member to discuss their progress, and access laboratory, computer, design studio, and/or prototype facilities. This opportunity brings together teams from all eight departments to

<sup>3</sup> Few classes exceed this ratio (e.g., Calculus, Biology) or grant non-honors students permission to enroll in *Designated Courses*

<sup>4</sup> If in College of Biological Sciences, an advisor in the Dean's Office/  
Biological Academic Success Center (BASC).



share their design projects with their peers, professors and the public.

Students eligible for this pathway should discuss the design project courses with their major advisor early in their academic career for academic planning purposes. attend the event in Spring to learn more about the design projects and expectations and outcomes. Senior participants in the Engineering Design Showcase, satisfy their conference presentation requirement for honors.

## **II. Thesis in Major**

Thesis in Major, Signature Work is a common option. Students should discuss this pathway with their major advisor early in their academic career for academic planning purposes. They can explain any prerequisites, qualifiers (e.g., UC GPA), and deadlines pertaining to an honors thesis. Signature Work is generally independent research/projects that occur outside the classroom, requiring time to build networks and make an informed decision.

### **Preparation**

Thesis in Major good practice is to follow the expectations of the department and faculty sponsor. If the department or faculty sponsor does not require a formal research proposal, the development of a draft outline helps to provide a clear purpose or problem statement to guide the student and faculty sponsored conversations. This manuscript tool is also useful in setting expectations for the thesis for both parties. Students are welcome to seek support from the Third- and Fourth-Year (Honors) Advisor and utilize UHP Thesis Proposal Form as a guide to create their own thesis proposal.

### **Advising**

Thesis enrollment is often managed by the major advisor. In some cases, a student will need to convene with either their Faculty Thesis Advisor or Master Faculty Advisor in the major for approval

and course(s) registration. Many majors require two sequential quarters, others three quarter, and a few, one quarter of thesis coursework, preceded by a prerequisites (e.g., 193 or 199 credit).

### **Grading**

Thesis in Major grading is not uniform. Most courses are graded on a pass/no pass (P/NP) scale, others are graded each quarter, while some sequential classes (e.g., xxx 194HA first quarter, xxx 194HB second quarter) receive deferred grading—the first in the series receiving an in-progress (IP) grade until completed in full.

### **Interdepartmental**

For some biological or natural science students, they may be serving as a research assistant for a faculty member outside of their department major, whose study is connected to the undergraduate's field of study.

*Examples: (A) Genetics major participating in research in an Animal Biology lab or (B) Ecology major participating in research in a Plant Pathology lab.*

To ensure that this will meet Thesis in Major guidelines, it is important to seek departmental consent (faculty advisor) and to explain how the research question and methodology relate to the student's department major. Once approved, reach out to the major advisor to complete the required paperwork and to receive course registration information. Be sure to keep the Third- and Fourth-Year (Honors) Advisor informed.

Due to Signature Work complexity, seek advice frequently to better understand major requirements.

### III. UHP Project/Thesis (HNR 195)

UHP Project/Thesis, Signature Work option is often pursued by students whom do not have either a Thesis in Major or Engineering Design Project option or wish to pursue culminating work in a minor, creative activity, public focused (e.g., workshops and presentations) venture, etc. A UHP Project/Thesis may also be completed with other honors students with defined individual expectations.

#### UHP Project Emphasis

UHP projects require significant time and effort to identify and address a specific community need. This path is meant to support honors students wishing to develop, organize, complete and assess an independent or team based project as a significant service contribution to the campus, surrounding community, state, or world. The project can also be a creative work (e.g., new music composition, play, work of art) contributing to critical thinking, inspiration, and sense of connectedness on campus and in the community. While creative work is by definition novel, projects can build upon existing work done by local service organizations, but should clearly extend the scope of outreach, (e.g., program development, assessment).

Team projects do not partition the work that an individual would ordinarily complete, rather accomplish intertwined goals that are distinct, contributing to a deeper end product. Team members with complementary knowledge, skills, and abilities are desirable to fulfilling specific outcomes that an individual alone would not accomplish.

Typical distribution of time commitment:

- **20% Background research (literature, interviews, other sources) and planning phase**
- **70% Initiating, conducting, and evaluating project**

- **5% Presentation of project at the Undergraduate Research Conference or other venue**
- **5% Writing a short “white paper” describing project, its assessment, and recommendations for the future**

Students who engage in a Project must have guidance and supervision from a UC Davis faculty member with whom they complete UHP Project Proposal Form. The said document requires the student to inform the proposal readers—program staff or faculty—of the project’s purpose, the population (individuals or groups) for whom the activity is being developed and delivered, the goals, how it will be designed and implemented, and for specific action items (goals) with due dates over two quarters. UHP Project Proposal Form is available on [UHP Signature Work website](#).

#### UHP Thesis Emphasis

Akin to Thesis in Major, a UHP Thesis is a significant research study the student undertakes with the support and direction of a faculty member. The student selects a faculty member of their choice for the thesis. Students are encouraged to select a faculty member who has knowledge in the area of study the student plans to engage in, while also being available and accessible to the student during the two quarters the student is completing the thesis.

A UHP Thesis is based on students’ original research. This Signature Work takes the form of a written manuscript that presents study findings. In the humanities and social sciences, a document may average 20-50 pages in length consisting of two or more chapters; it may be shorter, depending on the qualitative or quantitative nature of the research. In the natural sciences, a document may be shorter, often taking the form of a detailed laboratory report in the form of a publishable manuscript. The selected UC Davis faculty mentor/sponsor will define the thesis document parameters.

A completed UHP thesis should:

- Produce new knowledge or build upon existing foundations
- Satisfy intellectual curiosity
- Encourage reflection on one's positionality
- Develop transferable skills
- Develop project management skills to keep within clear timelines and manage resources
- Provide the opportunity to work closely with faculty sponsor/mentor
- Open future professional opportunities
- Provide an opportunity for early feedback to produce a refined end product
- Provide the opportunity to present finding in a public forum (e.g., conference)

To develop ideas for one's thesis, students should have topics of study in mind, literature to consult, and have access to the necessary materials/information. To aid in the construction of a clear thesis idea, create responses to this statement: "The purpose of this study is ..." When a student is confident they will be able to investigate the purpose statement, one then has a thesis question.

If the student is planning to conduct interviews, do surveys, or other research involving human-subjects, the student must consult with their faculty sponsor to discuss the process of obtaining approval from the university's [Institutional Research Board in regards to Human Subjects](#) if needed. Likewise, formal approvals for vertebrate animal use and chemical safety training, if required, will be necessary in consultation with the faculty mentor.

### UHP Signature Work Details

A UHP Signature Work Guidebook has been developed for honors participants to assist them through the process. Honors students pursuing the project/thesis in the program are required to submit a proposal available on UHP's Signature Work website.

**Deadlines:**

- **Fall and Winter Sequence:** Proposal form is due by the 10th day of instruction of Fall Quarter
- **Winter and Spring Sequence:** Proposals forms are due in December, by the last day of Fall Quarter instruction—the Friday before final exam week

When the Signature Work Project/Thesis proposal is approved, students will receive a course registration number and enroll in HNR 195 for a minimum of two consecutive quarters based on their specified terms (e.g., Winter/Spring). Each course is 3-units and letter graded. Enrollees need to update the units to 3-units as it defaults to 1 in the registration system. The faculty sponsor grades the course at the end of each quarter; it is not a cumulative grade. It is important the student has clear direction from their faculty sponsor on what is due by the end of each quarter to be awarded an appropriate grade. A student must have and maintain at least the UC GPA of 3.25 to qualify for this course.

Students are welcome to begin preliminary project work before actual course enrollment. For more detail, reach out to the Third- and Fourth-Year Advisor.

*"The fourth-year project is a huge opportunity. I'm really excited about my ability to do a thesis with professors who know I'm an honors student, and to be able to call it an honors thesis on my transcript."*

- Sydney Woods, honors student pursuing a major in Animal Science

# UHP Appeals

A UHP student that misses an honors curriculum component for the year and/or drops below the UC GPA minimum of 3.250 may be eligible to appeal and remain in the program. This is dependent upon how many years they have attended the University, GPA range, academic trajectory, program engagement (e.g., advising), and other related variables. Students whom meet most or all of the noted factors, may be afforded an opportunity to appeal during summer. Students are informed of the programs decision before the start of Fall Quarter. Up to two appeals may be granted.

*“The heart of our program is attracting and supporting students of enormous potential—helping them to find their voice and their calling. Through UHP, they come to honor the gift of knowledge within themselves and to discover their own capacity to achieve extraordinary things.”*

- J. David Furlow, UHP Director, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, and Professor of Neurobiology, Physiology and Behavior

