Honors Program Courses

*Honors Discover Chicago/Explore Chicago Courses

HON 110 – Honors Discover Chicago

Honors Discover Chicago courses acquaint first-year honors students with the metropolitan community, its neighborhoods, cultures, people, institutions, organizations and issues. Students will also learn about university life and resources and will become acquainted with the honors scholarly community. The course begins with Immersion Week, one week prior to the official start of the autumn quarter, then continues through the first eight weeks of the quarter. Learning in HON 110 is accomplished through a variety of means including first-hand observation, reflection, discussion, writing, site visits, and encounters with Chicagoans both in the classroom and on excursions. Students will select a particular Honors Discover course from available offerings. Students with credit for HON 110 cannot receive credit for HON 111.

HON 111 – Honors Explore Chicago

Honors Explore Chicago courses acquaint first-year honors students with the metropolitan community, its neighborhoods, cultures, people, institutions, organizations and issues. Students will also learn about university life and resources and will become acquainted with the honors scholarly community. Learning in HON 111 is accomplished through a variety of means including first-hand observation, reflection, discussion, writing, site visits, and encounters with Chicagoans both in the classroom and on excursions. Students will select a particular Honors Explore course from the available offerings. Students with credit for HON 111 cannot receive credit for HON 110.

*Honors Core Courses

HON 100  RHETORIC AND CRITICAL INQUIRY

An intensive writing course in a workshop format. This class leads students through a sequence of writing assignments which require them to take positions and persuade audiences about issues of public concern. Students work in writing groups and practice revising their work. Each student will also be introduced to library research and will complete a short research paper. Students will study issues of form and style as they learn how to create effective public discourse.
HON 101 WORLD LITERATURE

World Literature presents a sample of literature with historical, cultural, and geographical variety. This course invites students to study ways in which authors use literary techniques like point of view, patterns of imagery, and development of plot and character to address issues of importance to them. At the same time, it explores ways in which the specific techniques that authors choose may be informed by their culture, their place in a literary tradition, their moment in history, and even their geography. Each section of the course will focus on a theme to be explored through the required readings. Those readings should include texts from a range of cultures and historical periods. Reading, writing, and informed discussion are at the heart of this course. Students will be trained in techniques of close reading and in strategies for marshaling evidence to support their interpretation of a text. In addition, students will learn strategies for researching information to help place texts within an historical and cultural context. Given the international nature of readings in Honors World Literature, students will also be introduced to issues surrounding translations.

HON 102 HISTORY IN GLOBAL CONTEXTS

Historical consciousness at the college level entails mastering the content of the subject studied and cultivating an awareness of how knowledge about that history was constructed. This course invites students to explore how the interdisciplinary tools of historical inquiry aid them in their encounter with the multicultural past via study of a particular society (or societies). An overarching goal of the Honors History course is to produce students who are historically literate and able to think critically in historical modes. Through acquisition of historical knowledge and the honing of critical analytical abilities, students learn to develop their own historical perspectives and enhance their understanding of the relevance of the human past to the present and future. Faculty interested in teaching HON 102 should include with their request a short subtitle indicating the topic of the section they would like to offer.

HON 104 RELIGIOUS WORLDVIEWS AND ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES

This course helps students understand religious worldviews by allowing them to examine individual religious traditions. The course situates several religious traditions within a comparative framework; students gain knowledge of the nature and function of religion in a broad spectrum of human experience, encounter a variety of religious experiences and expressions, find in them common patterns, structures, and concerns, and become aware of the different ways of being religious. Each section will in some way address a variety of religious expressions and actions such as ritual, myth, ethics, cosmology, space, and time.
HON 105   PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

This course is an introduction to philosophy and its methods of inquiry insofar as they have to do with questions of knowledge, truth, right and wrong action, and personal and social identity. Specific topics will also seek to address how these more general themes of knowledge, action, and human identity relate to how such questions are posed in the modern period, how one thinks critically about such questions and attempts to respond to them, and what it means to inquire about the human condition in a rational manner. Readings will be drawn from both primary philosophical texts and relevant material from other disciplines e.g. history, literature, political thought. All students will be expected to learn to analyze, discuss, and write philosophically about such materials.

HON 180   DATA ANALYSIS AND STATISTICS

In this course, students develop and apply quantitative and statistical reasoning skills to become confident, critical and capable users of quantitative information. The course emphasizes the use of real-world data and open-ended investigations from a variety of disciplines to help motivate students to focus on the outcomes of analysis and provide a context for the application of specific methodology. This course also develops students’ technological expertise as it strengthens their critical thinking and communication skills. Prerequisite(s): LSP 120, MAT 130, or placement into calculus.

*HONORS TOPICS COURSES

HON 201   States, Markets and Societies

This course focuses on the organization of economic, political and social relationships within the global system. It includes analysis of how these relationships affect the distribution of power, resources, well-being and cultural capital in different societies. It covers such topics as phases in the growth of global trade and investment; the role of economic incentives, the historical and conceptual relationship between markets, social stratification, and forms of popular participation; and the development challenges posed by international inequality and social marginality.

Honors 201 draws faculty from different fields and colleges with a variety of disciplinary interests. The methodology and range of analytical frameworks, thematic issues, and geographical areas for this course will vary according to the area of expertise of the faculty
teaching the section. In each section, faculty will reflect on the type of methodology they use in
the course and make the issue of methodological choice transparent for the students. While the
emphases in these sections might differ, all sections will discuss markets and how they operate;
the interplay between states, markets and societies; and the impact of these processes on people’s
lives.

HON 205  HONORS INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS

Through courses in the arts, Honors students learn about other cultures while developing their
capacity to understand and respond to works of art. Honors students, with the exception of
students in Theatre and Music (who already encounter the arts in their major programs) take two
courses in the creative arts. One of these is a studio course or practicum chosen from college and
departmental offerings in applied theatre courses, studio art, music, and creative writing. The
other is Honors 205, an interdisciplinary Honors course designed to complement and inform this
creative activity. The Honors arts course asks students to become more perceptive and informed
audiences of artistic works and helps them to examine and analyze works of art both as formal
structures and as elements of a cultural and historical setting.

HON 205 offers interdisciplinary study of two or more art forms in a particular historical period,
looking at relations among the arts and between art and its cultural context. The course will
focus on art forms from the visual arts, drama, cinema, or music. Work in the course will be
interdisciplinary and will include close analysis, readings, visits to relevant performances or
exhibits, and papers.

HON 207  TOPICS IN COGNITIVE STUDIES

This course introduces cognitive studies, an interdisciplinary field that draws upon aspects of
cognitive psychology, philosophy, linguistics, anthropology, education, neuroscience and
artificial intelligence. Its unifying goal is to construct and evaluate process-oriented theories of
how people think and reason. Students will read and discuss articles describing cognitive
models, experiment with observation or simulations of aspects of human cognition, and debate
whether certain models serve as viable scientific theories. They will compare and write about
theories and models, and explain how well these account for human behavior. In addition to
introducing the field of cognitive studies, individual sections of the course may focus on
particular issues or disciplinary perspectives, as indicated in the section’s subtitle. Prerequisite:
HON 180, Data Analysis and Statistics, or the mathematics course required for the student’s
major.
HON 225  HONORS LAB SCIENCE TOPICS

Science is both an accumulated body of knowledge and a human-constructed process of discovery. Courses in this category pull together content knowledge from at least two scientific disciplines while exploring the methods and approaches used in the acquisition of knowledge in these fields. The lecture/discussion uses scientific articles and case studies to explore the impact of scientific discovery on the scientific community and on society. Significant historical events as well as current controversies or active areas of investigation help students better understand the strengths and limits of scientific inquiry as well as the reciprocal relationship between science and society. The lab component allows students to have first-hand experience with the content of the course, and also provides opportunities for student-directed investigations that model scientific inquiry as a problem solving approach.

These courses will develop an understanding of how the world works and how different scientific disciplines contribute to this knowledge. In addition, these courses help students develop a greater curiosity about the natural world, the skills to answer their questions and evaluate the research of others, and the ability to place in perspective the contributions of science to society.

HON 301  JUNIOR SEMINAR IN MULTICULTURALISM

Multiculturalism in these courses encompasses various dimensions of identity, including but not limited to issues of race, nationality, ethnicity, class, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation, and disability. Students are asked to develop a critical perspective about the meaning of multiculturalism and provide an understanding of the historical and/or contemporary manifestations of inequality.

As an important step in the process of developing strategies for responsible participation in our diverse society, the Honors Junior Seminar invites students to learn skills for conducting research on approved topics. Courses which connect local and global issues and/or that involve team projects or a service learning component are especially welcome. All Honors Junior Seminars focus on multiculturalism and will fulfill the university’s multicultural requirement. As a 300-level course, the seminar should be directed at students who are at a moderately advanced level of college study and represent a wide spectrum of majors. All HON301 courses include a research paper assignment.
SENIOR THESIS AND SENIOR CAPSTONE SEMINARS

HON 395        SENIOR THESIS

All honors students are encouraged to write a senior thesis. A thesis allows students to build on work done in previous classes or to open a new area of inquiry through independent research and writing, under the guidance of a thesis director and second faculty reader. Proposals for a senior thesis are signed by the two faculty advisors and submitted to the Honors Program office; once the proposal is approved, the student registers for HON 395 Senior Thesis. Additional information and forms for proposals are available in the Honors Program office.

Any student who does not elect to write a Senior Thesis is required to take a Senior Capstone Seminar, either HON 350 or HON 351. We will offer several Senior Capstone Seminars each quarter.

HON 350  SENIOR CAPSTONE SEMINAR

This seminar course provides a capstone to the Honors Program and is designed to foster skills in interdisciplinary research and writing. Students in this course are expected to present their work either within class or in an external venue. We invite proposals on specific topics. Course proposals should provide information about the research, writing and presentation expectations of the course. All HON 350 courses include a research paper assignment.

HON 351  SENIOR CAPSTONE SEMINAR IN SERVICE LEARNING

This Honors capstone course brings students into the community as they develop research skills, deepen their capacity for social engagement, and explore models of service and activism. Honors 351 is approved for experiential learning credit. Syllabi should be constructed around community-based service learning projects developed in conjunction with the Steans Center. All HON 351 courses include a research paper assignment.