The CALS Honors Program allows talented and highly motivated students to continue challenging themselves in the classroom and beyond. CALS has two different avenues to earn an Honors degree designation: Honors in Research or Honors in Major. Information about Honors in Major is located in the "requirements" tab for each major.

HONORS IN RESEARCH

Students completing the CALS Honors in Research track engage in the university’s great research tradition through the completion of two research projects: an introductory project and a senior thesis project. Students identify a faculty mentor to oversee their research efforts and support their progression through the program. In addition to the hands-on research experience, students are required to enroll in coursework directed at furthering their knowledge in quality and ethical scientific discovery. Students who successfully complete Honors in Research will receive an Honors designation on their diploma.

HOW TO GET IN

Admission to the Honors Program is not competitive provided students meet the required admission criteria.

Admission Criteria for New Freshmen:

- In the upper 10% of their high school graduating class
- ACT score of 28 or higher
- SAT score of at least 1240

Admission Criteria for Transfer and Continuing UW-Madison Students:

- UW-Madison cumulative GPA of at least 3.25

Highly motivated students can apply for admission to the program in the absence of these requirements by including a letter with their application addressed to the Honors Dean in 116 Agricultural Hall explaining why they should be in the program.

HOW TO APPLY

Apply to the program online (https://cals.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/honorsapplication_form.pdf) or pick up an application in the Office of Academic Affairs, 116 Agricultural Hall. Applications are accepted at any time.

New freshmen will automatically be enrolled in Honors in Research. It is possible to switch to Honors in the Major in the student’s first semester on campus after meeting with the advisor for that major by completing the application form and selecting Honors in the Major. Transfer and continuing students may apply directly to Honors in Research or Honors in the Major (after meeting with the major advisor).

HOW TO CANCEL PARTICIPATION

Students who are no longer interested in pursuing Honors should complete the form to cancel their participation. Students may cancel their participation at any time, and this will not be noted on the student’s transcript.

REQUIREMENTS

The Honors in Research track requires students to complete two research projects, an introductory project and a senior thesis project. Students work under the guidance of a faculty mentor for both projects.

In the course of this program, it is expected that the student will: (i) learn the background and methods of the discipline; (ii) identify an interesting and tractable problem or question for study; (iii) learn to draft a proposal defending the relevance and appropriateness of specific research efforts; (iv) demonstrate appropriate skills in working on that problem in a manner appropriate to a professional in the discipline; (v) analyze and interpret the results of their efforts; and (vi) present these results as a thesis and in an approved public forum.

To earn Honors in Research, students must first be admitted to the college’s Honors Program. Students must then make satisfactory progress toward the program requirements listed below and maintain a 3.25 GPA. Failure to maintain this progress will result in removal of the student from the Honors Program.

Program requirements:

- Identify a research mentor
- Complete introductory (one-semester) research project and presentation
- Complete three seminar courses (one credit each)
  - Inter-Ag 288 (spring of freshman year)
  - Inter-Ag 388 (spring of sophomore year)
  - Inter-Ag 488 (spring of junior year)
- Enroll in Senior Honors Thesis credits (681 and 682; or 699 in the mentor's department) for two semesters at a minimum of two credits each semester
- Complete a Senior Honors Thesis research project and presentation
- Submit the Senior Honors Thesis and related documentation to CALS Academic Affairs

Additional information can be found on the Honors website (https://cals.wisc.edu/academics/undergraduate-students/outside-the-classroom/honors-program/honors-in-research).

ADVISING AND CAREERS

Questions may be directed to the CALS Honors Program Manager at academicaffairs@cals.wisc.edu or 608-262-3003.