

# The Departmental Honors Program

## Department of Mathematics and Computer Science

The Departmental Honors Program is provided for those students who have a record of demonstrated high academic ability and accomplishment, and who could benefit from an in-depth research experience not otherwise available in the department curriculum. Departmental Honors is also one of several requirements for University Honors, though students not in the University Honors Program may also earn departmental honors.

The project can involve up to 10 semester hours of credit (COMP 499, DATA 499, MATH 499), and must culminate in both a substantial written thesis (or, in some cases, a software artifact with corresponding documents), as well an oral presentation and defense of the thesis and overall project.

### Eligibility Criteria

#### MAJOR:

- The student must major in Computer Science, Information Systems, Data Science, or Mathematics.

#### GPA:

- At the time of application to the program (during the spring of the junior year, hence through the fall of the junior year), the student must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.5 overall and at least 3.5 in all courses taken for the major, to be considered eligible. Students who have not met the GPA requirement by the time of application, but who anticipate reaching the 3.5 minimum GPA by the start of the fall of the senior year are encouraged to apply conditionally.
- The 3.5 minimum overall and major GPA's must also be met at the end of the student's overall academic program to earn honors.

#### COURSEWORK:

By the end of the junior year, the student should complete at least two-thirds of all coursework required for the B.A. major and essentially all of the coursework deemed most relevant for the student's proposed project.

- For COMP majors, this would be at least 30 of the minimum 44 semester hours required, including: at least four of the following core courses - COMP 150, COMP 250, COMP 255, COMP 265, COMP 275, and COMP 353.
- For INFO majors, this would be at least 31 of the minimum 47 semester hours required, including: at least four of the following core courses – INTRO STATS, COMP 150, COMP 250, COMP 295, and COMP 353.

- For DATA majors this would be at least 28 of the minimum 43 semester hours required, including: at least five of the following core courses – INTRO STATS, MATH 202/MATH 131, COMP 150, COMP 290, DATA 229, MATH 327.
- For MATH majors, this would be at least 28 of the minimum 43 semester hours required, including: at least five of the following core courses - MATH 201, MATH 202, MATH 210, MATH 227, MATH 261, and COMP 150.

## **Application/Selection Process**

The student must express an interest in the Departmental Honors Program by submitting the “Request for Departmental Honors” form (electronically) to the department’s Director of Departmental Honors no later than the beginning of spring break of the junior year.

The Director will then discuss the student’s qualifications with the rest of the department. If the Director and the department decide that the student is qualified, the student must submit a much more detailed project proposal to the Director, the deadline for which is two weeks before the last day of classes of the spring semester. This more detailed proposal will include:

- a detailed description of the project,
- a tentative bibliography,
- a timetable for the project, and
- the number of semester hours to be awarded in each semester of activity, including a statement indicating how many semester hours will count toward the student’s major.

If the proposal is accepted, a three-person supervisory committee will be chosen by the department, in consultation with the student. The committee will consist of two members of the department, one of whom will serve as primary project advisor, plus one person from outside the department.

## **Assessment**

The supervisory committee has the responsibility of providing guidance during the project and evaluation of the project at its conclusion, including evaluation of the student’s thesis and presentation. The deadline for presenting the thesis is April 15 each year, the deadline for the final thesis paper is the day prior to graduation. The committee will assign a letter grade for the project at the end of the final semester of activity. The department faculty, in consultation with the supervisory committee, will determine whether the student will receive Departmental Honors at graduation. This decision will be based upon the project itself (including the thesis and presentation) and the student’s overall academic performance.