

A man with short brown hair, wearing a grey cardigan over a light blue shirt, stands on a sandy beach. In the background, there is a coastal city with buildings and a church spire, under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The beach is wide and sandy, with a few people visible in the distance near the water's edge.

What is Tech Honors?

- A community of undergrads who love to learn, change, and grow
- A supportive intellectual network
- A curriculum of 22 Honors credits in which you take charge of your education
- Small, interactive courses, independent studies, and experiential learning
- A commitment to learning with others—ethically, open-mindedly, responsibly

Tech Honors is not

- Something to “get out of the way”
- Simply a resume item
- An elite, separate group
- Just a ramped-up version of your major
- An honor society

Matt Husband (Psychology and Math '03) won a Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) appointment to study prairie dog communication. He received his doctorate in linguistics from Michigan State University and is now an associate professor of psycholinguistics at the University of Oxford.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is Honors more work than other classes?

- Tech Honors courses don't assign more problem sets and extra chapters; the small courses foster depth and creative thinking.

Can I wait until my sophomore year to join?

- Yes, but you'll miss out on a year of academic opportunities, community, and first-year activities.

How will Honors help me in the future?

- Top employers and grad schools want more than good grades. Honors makes you stand apart: working with peers from diverse majors, taking initiative, developing research-based action, and communicating in a variety of settings. Our graduates have flexible, active minds.

What do Honors graduates do?

- Honors alumni win nationally competitive fellowships including the Fulbright, Udall, DAAD, and Goldwater; attend grad school at Duke, MIT, Oxford, Stanford, and Carnegie Mellon; work for NASA, Google, Harvard, and *National Geographic*; and do medical training at Johns Hopkins, Case Western, and UVA, among others.

Haley Dirmeyer (Multidisciplinary Studies '13) teaches middle school English in Maryville, Tennessee. She presents research at national conferences and leads her department's professional learning community. She coordinated peer mentors for freshman Honors classes and chaired the Honors student organization.





Benefits

Honors classes

Honors courses are small and interactive. Interdisciplinary Honors Colloquia topics have included astrophotography, Irish literature, brain chemistry, and political satire. You can design an independent study or do research with a professor. Early registration lets you get the classes you need.

Faculty unchained

You'll interact closely with Honors professors—not just in the classroom and not just in your own field—but also through participating in their research and conference presentations, enjoying group dinners and informal discussions, and collaborating on special projects. Honors Liaisons serve as advocates for your Honors experiences in your major.

Support systems

Honors is not a weed-out program: at every step, experienced Honors students serve as mentors, professors help you discover field-specific Honors opportunities, and our staff guides you as you create your own Honors path.

The Human Body and Visual Art, an Honors Colloquium, was co-taught by faculty from Nursing and Art. Students applied what they learned about anatomy by creating and critiquing their own artistic representations of how major organ systems function.

Outside the classroom

Discover your own strengths through student-run committees and other initiatives, an a cappella group, intramurals, and more. Honors housing, now a Learning Village, has a student-designed roommate matching system and a friendly community.

Finding your future

We'll help you prepare for your career and graduate school in creative and practical ways: you can study abroad, organize an innovative civic engagement project, network with Honors alumni, and present your research at professional conferences.

Read on

Read on to learn more about key Honors benefits: **Leadership, Research, Civic engagement, and Community.**

Rosa Vasquez (Biology and Chemistry '15) is completing a Ph.D. in chemical biology at the University of Michigan. She is the founder of IMAN, a non-profit that educates at-risk populations about health and nutrition in her home country, Peru. An award-winning dancer, she created the Salsa for Life project through Tech Honors to help improve young adults' psycho-motor skills.



A person with a backpack is standing on a rocky ledge, taking a photo of a vast desert canyon. The canyon features layered red rock formations and sparse vegetation under a clear blue sky. The person is wearing a dark tank top, black shorts, and a bright orange backpack. They are holding a smartphone up to capture the view.

Leadership

Honors thrives on the “what if…” factor: it fosters confidence in new approaches. Honors students learn the variety of forms leadership can take and explore the meaning of leadership in their own fields.

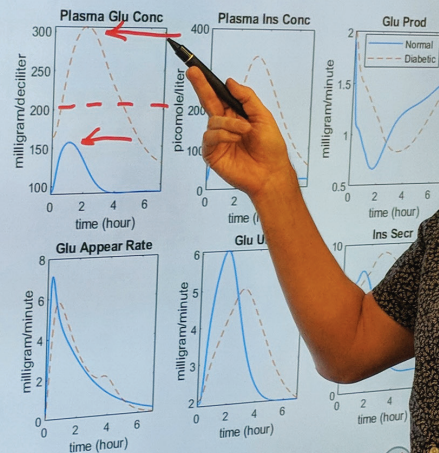
- Big Sibbs learn the value of communication as they help freshmen through the transition to college life.
- Peer mentors in Honors 1010 help faculty shape and lead the class.
- Leadership workshops prepare you to strategize, manage, communicate, and find your own ways of leading.
- The Honors Council gives students an equal voice with faculty to shape the academic program.
- Honors Leadership Development Seminar is a project-based class that lets you research and create change.
- Students collaborate in the continuous improvement of Honors, learning to negotiate processes in a dynamic environment.

Katy Long Snow (International Business and Cultures '09) won a Critical Language Scholarship to study Turkish, and a Fulbright grant to the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna where she received a master's in international diplomacy. After working at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, she leads an international consulting firm.

Research

- Honors Faculty Liaisons can help you find research opportunities early in your undergraduate career.
- Honors Contracts can introduce you to research in your field—and introduce you to a potential research mentor.
- Honors Directed Study lets you work on a one-to-one basis with a faculty member in a semester-long independent study that you have designed.
- Honors Colloquia offer unique experiences in multidisciplinary research with students in a variety of majors.
- The Honors Interdisciplinary Thesis Option is a rigorous two-semester path for students with a sustained research focus.
- Honors Upper Division in the Major partners with your department to offer Honors research in an advanced course.
- Students pursuing Chemical Engineering Distinction in the Major can earn Honors credit for their individually mentored original research.

Arthur Goldsipe (Chemical Engineering '97) earned a Ph.D. from MIT. He works for Mathworks and presents his research internationally. He's seen here modeling the glucose-insulin response.





Civic engagement

- The Ginkgo Grant, created and funded by Honors students, supports substantial, ingenious projects, such as a band camp in an underserved area and a low-cost wind turbine powering a Malawian school.
- Traditional service projects build community among first-year students as they connect to and are inspired by the Cookeville area.
- Colloquia such as The Science of Hunger, Social Justice and Engineering, and Local Institutions and Civic Engagement use case studies to help you explore new perspectives and solutions.
- Honors Experiential Learning lets you earn course credit for using skills and knowledge from your major to address a social issue.
- Students with high potential for combining civic engagement and research can receive mentorship for making their vision a reality.

Shelby Williams ('17) is one of three nursing majors in the nation selected as a University Innovation Fellow by Stanford University. She is studying to become a family nurse practitioner at Belmont University.

Community

- The Honors Center brings together students and staff for much more than routine business, meetings, and paperwork! It's a hub for brainstorming and student-centered activity.
- The Honors Lounge hosts informal and scheduled events: discussions, workshops, seminars, meetings, study sessions. It's also a place to relax, offering games, books, free periodicals, and food.
- Honors housing features a unique student-designed roommate matching process, study and meeting rooms, ping pong, a lending library, outdoor hammocks, and a supportive atmosphere. The Honors Residence Hall is a Living and Learning Village that offers social and educational opportunities planned in collaboration between students and the Honors Faculty Village Head.
- The Associated Scholars Guild is the Honors student organization, sponsor of social and service events that build teamwork and lifelong friendships.
- Honors faculty foster continuity in and out of the classroom. Their insights and mentorships form the cornerstone of the Honors community.
- Honors Alumni Mentors comprise a network of experienced professionals, ready to share advice.

Honors graduates frequently report that the supportive community in Tech Honors was the best part of their college experience.





Requirements

Honors requirements complement your course of study over a four-year period. Honors students are expected to take an active role in integrating Honors experiences throughout their curriculum, earning a minimum of 22* Honors credit hours:

- Honors 1010: Introduction to Honors, an interactive one-credit-hour course.
- 15 Honors credits earned from at least three disciplines. You can earn these credits not only through Honors courses, but also from individualized, proposal-based projects related to your major. Options include competitive internships, research, study abroad, and substantial service leadership.
- 6 Honors credits of advanced work, including at least one Honors Colloquium and one of the following: Upper Division in the Major, Directed Study, Interdisciplinary Thesis, Chemical Engineering Distinction in the Major, or a second Colloquium.
- A cumulative 3.5 GPA or above upon graduation.

*2019-20 curricular standards

Honors conferences provide a welcoming environment to present your own research, perform, and exchange ideas in cities such as Boston, Seattle, and Denver.

Application information

1. Applicants should have demonstrably strong communication skills, self-motivation, and intellectual curiosity well beyond their chosen field of study in addition to high grades and standardized test scores.
2. Explore the Honors website (tntech.edu/honors) before applying, especially the sections regarding classes, requirements, and opportunities.
3. If you have any questions that aren't answered on the website, we are happy to hear from prospective students who take the responsibility for asking their own questions.
4. Before starting your application, carefully read over the directions and the application form itself, posted under "How to Apply" in the "For Prospective Students" section of the Honors website.
5. For the latest application deadlines and updates, see our website.

Mary Kidd (Physics '04) earned a Ph.D. in experimental nuclear physics from Duke University and completed a postdoc at Los Alamos National Laboratory. She is now an associate professor at Tech where she studies rare nuclear decay and co-taught the 2018 Honors Colloquium on astrophotography.





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