CSUN Psychology Honors Program: Information for Students

Congratulations on your admission to the Psychology Honors program! We look forward to supporting your continued academic success and professional development. Please use this guide to aid in navigating the program and its requirements, and feel free to contact any member of the Honors Committee if you have any questions.

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A. Overview of program

1. Program contact information

Psychology Honors Program website: http://www.csun.edu/psychhonors
Program chairs: Janet Oh (janetoh@csun.edu; 818.677.6970) and Debbie Ma (debbie.ma@csun.edu; 818.677.2924)

2. Mission statement

The purpose of the Honors in Psychology program is to recognize and support the development of exceptional Psychology students. The Honors program allows students the opportunity to engage in advanced level coursework to better prepare for graduate coursework and/or careers in the field of Psychology.

3. Program requirements

Upon successful completion of the program, students will receive an Honors designation on their diploma and transcript.

Students in the Honors in Psychology program must:
   a) complete honors sections of the following courses with a B+ or better:
      1) Research Methods in Psychology and Lab: PSY 321H/L
      2) One of the Psychology Capstone courses
   b) successfully complete PSY 492H (Honors Professional Development)
   c) complete a second honors section of a Psychology Capstone course OR one of the following graduate-level courses with a B+ or better:
      1) PSY 420/L or PSY 485US/USS Advanced Statistical Methods and Lab
      2) PSY 593A and 593B: (must complete both courses if choosing this option)
         Community Research Seminar I and II
      3) PSY 512 Seminar in Developmental Psychology
      4) PSY 519 Seminar in Autism Spectrum Disorders
      5) PSY 524/L Multivariate Analysis Computer and Lab
      6) PSY 540 Seminar in Social Psychology
      7) PSY 591A Seminar in Cognition
      8) PSY 591B Seminar in Emotion and Motivation
      9) PSY 592B Seminar in Research Methods
   d) maintain a portfolio of their honors assignments from the required courses above
   e) present a project at the Department of Psychology’s Honors Forum. The project must be conducted under the supervision of a faculty member in Psychology and may be an empirical research project, a literature review project, or a community project.
   f) maintain a minimum 3.50 GPA in all of their upper-division Psychology coursework.
If an Honors student fails to meet or maintain any of the requirements of the program, s/he will be immediately dropped from the program (see section B1).

4. Typical timeline

We expect that most students will complete the Honors program requirements within 2 years. Below is a typical timeline for completion of coursework. Please note that this is just a guide – there will be many factors that affect how and when the requirements are completed.

Semester 1:
- PSY 492H
- PSY 321H/L

Semester 2:
- honors capstone

Semester 3 or 4:
- graduate seminar or second honors capstone
- present project at Honors Forum

5. Advisement

Much of the career and graduate school advisement for Honors students will happen in the Honors Professional Development course (PSY 492H). The instructor of this course will serve as students’ primary mentor and will be available for one-on-one advising with Honors students as needed. Students are also assigned a mentor from the Honors Committee. Additionally, Honors students are encouraged to find faculty mentors to supervise an Honors projects (see section B5).

6. Enrollment in Honors sections

Honors sections of PSY 321H/L and capstones will be embedded within existing, non-honors sections. For example, in a 24-student PSY 321 lab, some seats may be set aside for Honors students, who will enroll in PSY 321H/L. This means that Honors students will be seated in the same classroom as non-honors students, but will receive an Honors designation on their transcript for the class. As such, Honors students will be held to different expectations (see section B2).

Enrollment in Honors sections will be by permission number only. Students should contact Ms. Jessica Worland (jessica.worland@csun.edu) to obtain permission numbers. Requests will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis

HELPFUL HINT: there are a limited number of seats in honors sections, so we strongly encourage students to enroll as early as possible. Honors enrollment deadlines will be announced before the start of the semester. Honors seats will be removed after the
deadline, so those students who do not enroll before the deadline risk not getting a seat that semester and consequently not completing the requirements of the program.

B. Coursework requirements

1. Academic progress

All Honors coursework must be completed with a B+ or better grade (with the exception of PSY 492H, which is graded CR/NC). Honors students must also maintain a minimum 3.50 GPA in all of their upper-division Psychology coursework.

The Honors committee will check on students’ progress at the end of each semester. Students who do not meet the requirements will immediately be dropped from the program.

HELPFUL HINT: We strongly encourage students to contact their mentors (see section A5) or any other member of the Honors committee (see section D) as soon as they anticipate any difficulty meeting these requirements. The Honors committee wants to work with students to address any issues that may come up, and the probability of successfully addressing an issue is highest when the problem first arises.

2. Honors syllabi

Honors students are expected to complete additional work beyond what is expected of non-honors students in the same class. Instructors of Honors sections of PSY 321/L and capstones will provide a separate Honors syllabus, which will clearly outline expectations of Honors students, highlighting Honors assignment(s). The Honors syllabus should be emailed to students prior to the start of class, and an announcement should be made on the first day of class to request that Honors students set up a meeting to discuss these expectations.

3. Graduate-level seminars

Honors students who enroll in graduate-level seminars to fulfill the requirements of the program are not expected to complete any additional assignments in these classes since they are already above and beyond the typical undergraduate load.

4. Honors portfolio

Students in the Honors program should keep a portfolio of the Honors assignments from their required coursework. Digital copies are preferred. Upon completion of the program, the chair of the Honors committee will collect the portfolio and keep them for program evaluation purposes. Students should also consider submitting portions of their portfolio, where appropriate and relevant, when applying to graduate programs or jobs.
5. **Honors forum presentation**

Students in the Honors Program are also required to present a project at the Department of Psychology's Honors Forum at the end of the academic year (usually in April or May). The project must be completed under the supervision of a faculty member in Psychology and may be an empirical research project, a literature review project, or a community project.

The project may be one that was completed as part of the requirements of an Honors course (e.g., the final project for PSY 321H/L). Although not required, we also encourage students to use this as an opportunity to seek out experiences outside of the classroom, such as volunteering in a professor's research lab or at a community-based organization, which can then be presented at the Honors Forum. Such experiences not only make excellent additions to your resumé/CV, they can also aid in exploring options for careers and/or graduate school.

**HELPFUL HINT:** if you are interested in finding a faculty mentor for a research lab or community-based experience, a good place to start is the Psychology Department webpage, where you can find bios that describe faculty members’ interests: [http://www.csun.edu/social-behavioral-sciences/psychology/full-time-faculty](http://www.csun.edu/social-behavioral-sciences/psychology/full-time-faculty) (click on a faculty member’s name, and then on “Bio”). When you have found a faculty member (or two or more!) whose interests are a good match with yours, send them a brief email describing your interests, why you are interested in working with her/him, and ask for a meeting to discuss if it might be a good fit. Do not hesitate to contact a few faculty members and then decide after meeting with them. Please also contact your mentors (see section A5) for assistance in this process.

C. **Professional conduct**

Whether in an Honors class, in a research lab, or at an Honors event, Honors students are representatives of the Honors program. As such, we expect Honors students to conduct themselves in a professional manner. This applies to both email and face-to-face interactions, and includes:

- prompt responses to emails from course instructors or Honors committee faculty
- appropriately addressed emails (i.e., “Dear Professor X”, not “hey prof!”)
- emails written in complete sentences with proper spelling and grammar, and not in “texting shorthand”
- punctuality in meeting deadlines and attending meetings and classes
- respectful classroom behavior (e.g., no texting, consistent attendance, adequate preparation)

**Academic integrity** is expected of all students in this program. Reports of plagiarism or cheating in any form will result in immediate dismissal from this program.
If you have questions about professional conduct, please consult with your mentors (see section A5). We are here to assist with your academic as well as professional development.

D. Honors committee membership 2015-16

The Honors Committee is here to support you! Please feel free to contact any of us with questions or concerns. We encourage you to contact one of us as soon as possible to address any issues so that we can deal with them before they progress further.

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