

## Some Information on the BHCC Honors Program

**The mission of the BHCC Honors Program is to provide nurture and develop a sense of community for**

- mature, inquisitive, and intellectually-interested students;
- students who wish to develop their analytical abilities and to gain experience in presenting ideas more effectively both in written and oral forms;
- students ready for greater intellectual challenge and for more independent investigation and research, in order to expand their opportunities for higher service in society and to be better prepared for advanced baccalaureate and graduate studies;
- students who wish to examine issues in depth with peers from other academic disciplines and cultural traditions;
- students prepared to bring the insights they gain from honors work into other classes and settings in the College, thereby enriching learning throughout the community.

### **Admission Criteria**

Eligibility for the honors program is flexible. One of the following criteria must be met. The student must be:

1. A current BHCC student with at least 12 earned credits with a minimum 3.5 cumulative GPA.
2. A recent high school graduate with a minimum B+ average.
3. A transfer student from another college with at least 12 earned credits with a minimum 3.5 cumulative GPA.
4. A transfer student who has satisfactorily completed work in another community college or college honors program.

In addition to meeting the academic standard described above, the student must also complete an application which includes a short essay discussing the academic plans and the role they hope the honors program will play in these plans. The application also requires two letters of recommendation.

- **Program Curriculum**

The Honors Program curriculum is based on four honors components and an honors seminar with an eye toward offering a variety of courses to satisfy the individual student's needs, both academic and personal.

Honors components may be developed in any college-level course whose instructor agrees to mentor an honors student in creating and fulfilling an honors experience beyond the basic course requirements. Such an experience could be special field or library research, a critical analysis of a scholar's works, or a portfolio in an appropriate medium, as agreed upon by the student and mentor in an honors contract. Completion of this contract earns the student honors credit for that course. Over the last two academic years, the program has, under a BHE grant, run workshops to develop honors components in which participating faculty members each created three sample contracts. Currently, instructors in over forty courses have agreed to supervise honors students' contracts.

The Honors Seminar is an interdisciplinary three-credit course that focuses on a selected overall theme each semester. The seminar offers presentations by a team of faculty and outside specialists who explore aspects of that theme from the interdisciplinary perspectives of the natural or social sciences or the humanities. Student participants from different degree concentrations and programs develop their library research and presentation skills through individual and group projects. The culmination of the semester's work is each student's oral and written presentation of an independent research project tied to the overall theme, and student papers are eligible for publication in *Kaleidoscope*, the Honors Program publication.

Recent seminar titles have included The Middle East, Prospects and Possibilities of a New Millennium, and Denial of Diversity – Genocide in the Twentieth Century. The seminar on The Middle East offered presentations on ecology, geography and history, religious and gender issues, politics and economics, human rights problems, film and literature. The New Millennium seminar focused on scientific possibilities (bio-remediation, bio-diversity, genomics, and X-ray astronomy), futurism (*Blade Runner*, *Walden II*, the AIDS crisis, human stereotyping and liberation, global inequalities), history, and the arts. The Genocide seminar explored the topic from the perspectives of ethics, sociology and psychology, history, film and literature, and it dealt most specifically with the experiences of the Armenians, Cambodians, Rwandans, and Bosnians, the Ukrainian famine, and the Jewish Holocaust.

- **Graduation Criteria**

To graduate as an Honors Program Scholar, a student must:

1. meet all requirements for an associates degree program,
2. earn a minimum 3.5 cumulative GPA at BHCC,
3. complete at least four courses that include an honors component,
4. complete the Honors Seminar.

- **Program Resources**

The Honors Program at Bunker Hill belongs to both the National Collegiate Honors Council and the Northeast section of the Council. The budget provides funding for the co-directors to attend both national and regional meetings of the Council and also for selected students to attend.

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