

RIT Honors Program

Student Policy Handbook

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Statement of Values

The Honors Program recognizes academic excellence, service to the community, and exercise of leadership skills as core elements of a university experience that prepares students to play positive roles in society and make meaningful contributions to solving problems of national and global significance. Toward maintaining a climate conducive to such growth, the Honors Program is dedicated to the principles outlined in the university's Core Values, Honor Code, Diversity Statements, Compliance Policy, and Code of Ethical Conduct. And as a community of creative, intellectually active people who act ethically with personal and professional integrity, the Honors Program is committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment that fosters human dignity, provides equitable opportunity, and celebrates the contributions of all students and employees.

Academic Requirements

Successful completion of the Honors Program includes the equivalent of at least 15 credits of honors-level academic work by the time of graduation. We use the word "points" instead of the

word “credits” because students can strive above and beyond a typical academic program in co-curricular ways. For course work, one credit hour is equivalent to one point.

To fulfill the academic requirements you must meet the **GPA standard** specified for your year level ([click here](#) for specifics), earn an overall undergraduate GPA of at least 3.5 by the time of graduation, and complete honors-level academic work in three categories:

- Honors in General Education¹ (3 points)
- Honors in your Discipline (3 points)
- Other Honors Achievements (9 points)

Students must **complete at least 1 honors point per year until achieving at least 15 points**. An overview of ways to earn honors points is provided later in this document ([click here](#)).

Complementary Learning (CL)

Some kinds of learning are best accomplished outside the classroom, so an important part of the Honors Program is participation in activities that complement traditional academic work. Complementary learning activities typically involve service to the community, participating in activities that expose students to new cultures, or engaging in events that challenge their ways of thinking about their relationship to the larger society.

- Students in the Honors Program are expected to complete at least 20 hours of complementary learning each year until they have both...

completed at least 15 points of honors academic work,

AND

recorded a total of at least 70 hours.

Here are two examples:

- Example 1: Morgan stacks up an impressive 40 hours of complementary learning in the first and second years, and a respectable 6 points of honors-level academic work. Although $40+40 > 70$, Morgan is expected to continue doing and recording complementary learning (at least 20 hours per year) until reaching 15 points.
- Example 2: In an academic tour de force, Alex completes 15 points by the end of the second year. Having done 20 hours of complementary learning in the first year and another 20 in the second year, Alex is expected to continue doing and recording complementary learning (at least 20 hours per year) because $20+20 < 70$.

¹ This requirement is waived for students who enter the Honors Program through the internal admission process.

- Students are expected to do *more than one* thing per year! **No activity can earn more than 15 hours** (neither a one-time event such as Alternative Break, nor a distributed effort such as serving as an officer in a student organization).
- Students should report CL contemporaneously (no more than one month between activity and reporting). Activity can be reported at the Honors Program web site.
- First-year students: Activities must be completed during or after Honors Orientation.
- Internal Admission students: The annual cycle begins in the fall semester after you are formally accepted into the Honors Program.

An overview of complementary learning activities is provided later in this document ([click here](#)).

Standing and Withdrawal

Progress toward completion is measured at the end of each semester. Students in good standing may continue as part of the RIT Honors Program. Students who are not in good standing may be withdrawn from the Honors Program or moved to conditional standing (see below). Students can check their standing at the Honors Program web site.

Good Standing

To remain in **good standing** students must do the following:

- Complete ≥ 1 honors point each year (until academic requirements are complete)
- Fulfill the annual CL expectation in Table 1 (until academic requirements are complete)
- Have no conduct-related complaints or findings
- Maintain a GPA according to Table 1 (below)
 - Student GPA is evaluated at the end of each academic year.
 - If you are in a BS/MS program, your matriculation status will change from *undergraduate* to *graduate* at some point. The GPA mentioned in Table 1 refers to your undergraduate career GPA, only.

Table 1: Requirements to Maintain Good Standing

Year at RIT	Undergraduate GPA	Honors Points Per Year	Hours of CL Per Year
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1	GPA \geq 3.2	$\geq 3^*$	CL \geq 20 hours**
2	GPA \geq 3.3	$\geq 1^*$	CL \geq 20 hours**
3	GPA \geq 3.4	$\geq 1^*$	CL \geq 20 hours**
≥ 4	GPA \geq 3.5	$\geq 1^*$	CL \geq 10 hours**

** To complete the academic requirements of the program you must earn at least 15 honors points, including honors in general education and honors in the discipline. You must earn at least one point per year until fulfilling those requirements. You do not need to report honors points if your standing is “complete” when the academic year begins, but many students do!*

*** You do not need to report CL activity if your standing is “complete” when the academic year begins, but many students do! If you are finishing your honors points in your graduation year, your CL must be complete by the time of certification (in May or December).*

Conditional Standing

As deemed appropriate by the director of the Honors Program, students who are not in good standing may be moved to a **conditional standing** rather than being withdrawn from the program. Conditional standing may be appropriate in the following situations:

- A student’s GPA has fallen below Honors Program standards, but the student can remedy the issue in the next semester.
- A student fails to complete complementary learning requirements but is enacting plans address the deficit.
- A student fails to earn at least one honors point in an academic year before completing the Program’s academic requirements.

Such cases are addressed on an individual basis in consultation with the Honors Program staff and other advisors as deemed appropriate.

Conditional standing is typically offered for only one semester (not including summer), after which the student is expected to have demonstrated progress sufficient to be deemed in good standing. Students who have not demonstrated sufficient progress will be withdrawn.

- Example: Bucky’s finishes his second year at RIT with a GPA slightly below 3.3 and receives an email in the summer informing him that he has been moved to conditional standing. Bucky will be returned to good standing if his GPA exceeds 3.3 at the end of the fall semester, and he will be withdrawn otherwise.

Complete Standing

The **complete** standing is used to describe students who have (1) finished the academic requirements of the program including honors in the discipline and in general education, and

(2) who have remained in good standing during the years it took to do so, including the fulfillment of CL expectations in the year the academic requirements are completed.

Students whose standing is marked as complete are not required to report honors points or CL activity, but many do.

To maintain the complete standing, students must continue to meet the GPA standard for their specified year level. Students will be moved to conditional standing should their GPA fall below the standard, and withdrawn from the program in the following semester if the situation is not satisfactorily addressed.

Graduation

To graduate as part of the Honors Program,

1. You must be in good standing.
2. You must have an undergraduate GPA of at least 3.5.
3. You must have earned at least 15 honors points, including at least 3 points in your discipline and 3 points in general education.
4. And if you are completing your honors points in the year of your graduation, you must fulfill that year's CL expectation by the time of certification (in May or December).

If you are in a BS/MS program ([click here](#)) or a double major program ([click here](#)), please see the appropriate section of this document.

Earning Honors Points

Most students fulfill the honors achievement in general education by taking a designated Honors First Year Seminar in the first year; each of these courses fit into a student's program as a general education elective. Other honors achievements can be completed in a variety of ways, listed below.

Important Note 1: The Office of the Registrar tells the Honors Program about honors courses that you take at RIT, but earning points in any other way requires you to tell us about it by submitting a request in the User Tools segment of the honors web site.

Important Note 2: Grades of "pass" or "satisfactory" are ineligible for honors points. To earn honors points by completing coursework, you must pass the course with a standard grade type.

Honors Courses

Honors courses are identified by the honors attribute in the bulletin, and often by name (e.g., MATH-241H Honors Linear Algebra).

- Successful completion of an n -credit honors course earns n honors points.
- The Office of the Registrar sends course completion information to the Honors Program after each semester, so you should not need to report an RIT honors course to the Honors office. With that said, we have occasionally seen omissions that we don't understand, so at the beginning of the following semester you should check your record at the Honors Program web site.
- At most one honors course (max 3 points, total) may be completed at other universities.
 - Transfer credit must be accepted by RIT.
 - Such a course must be designated as *honors* on an official transcript.
 - Such a course cannot fulfill the *Honors in the Discipline* requirement.
 - Honors points are subject to the review of the Program Director.

Honors Options

An honors option is something that you do to earn credit in a standard course by going above and beyond the usual expectations. It is typically a project that is supervised by the instructor and approved in advance by the Honors office. Application forms and examples of approved proposals are at the Honors Program web site.

- All students may apply honors options to courses at the 200-level or higher, but only first-year students may apply honors options to 100-level courses.
- You must give a public presentation of your work (*e.g.*, presenting your work at a symposium, show, club meeting, or to faculty in your department, *etc.*).
- An honors option is an individual project. There may be multiple students in a class who are working on their own honors options, but your project is yours to do, so that when all is said and done, everyone knows that the deliverables are the result of your efforts.
- You must earn a grade of at least B– in the course for the honors option to count toward completion of your academic points.
- Successful honors options earn 1, 2, or 3 points according to whether the course is 1-credit, 2-credit, or more. (An honors option cannot earn more than 3 points.)
- Honors options must be approved by the Honors Office. Most students complete one honors option in a semester; some students complete two. Special approval is required for more than two honors options in a single semester, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- Applications for honors options will not be accepted for courses that are offered as Honors in the same academic term.
- Your honors option must be completed in the same semester that you propose it. In rare cases, a short extension may be granted after consultation your professor, but your request for an extension must be received (via email) before the conclusion of the final exam period.

Faculty Mentored Independent Study or Special Topics

Is there a topic that piques your interest but it's not in a course? Make one! Many professors are amenable to helping you develop a plan of study and guiding you toward new ideas and skills. Make an agreement with a professor (and perhaps some of your peer colleagues) and sign up for the appropriate independent study course.

- The course must be 200-level or higher.
- You must submit an honors option for that course (in the first week of the semester) to earn honors points.
- At most 3 points per semester.

Graduate Coursework

You may count graduate-level course work (600 or above).

- The graduate course must appear in the undergraduate segment of your transcript (so put it into the undergraduate cart when you enroll).
- A 3-credit graduate course *in your discipline* fulfills the disciplinary facet of the Honors Program (see below).
- A graduate course that is not in your discipline still counts, but not as fulfilling the disciplinary facet of the Honors Program.
- The graduate course may be completed at another university, but transfer credit must be accepted by RIT.
- At most 6 points, total

Faculty-Mentored Research Experiences

Research is understood broadly to include investigative, exploratory, creative, and innovative works. Research does not have to be in your discipline, but you can count it as an Honors Achievement in the Discipline if it is!

- The research can earn academic credit, but it cannot be part of an activity that is named by your home program as a requirement.
- You must (1) give a public presentation or exhibition of your work, (2) produce a written report about it, approved by your faculty mentor as demonstrating the substance and quality expected of undergraduate, honors-level work, and (3) submit your report to the Honors Office.
- Your work may be part of a larger, on-going research effort. It does not need to start and stop with you.
- This work may be done at another university (*e.g.*, NSF REU programs). In this case, your faculty mentor must send correspondence to the Honors Program describing the research experience and confirming your successful completion.
- Some departments use course shells dedicated to undergraduate research experiences as vehicles for awarding credit. Other departments use independent study course shells. If your research done within one of these non-required credit-bearing courses, you earn honors points according to credits (up to 3 per semester).

Otherwise, points are awarded based on the time that you commit to the project:

- 60 hours earns 1 point
 - 120 hours earns 2 points
 - 180 hours earns 3 points
- At most 3 points per semester

Vertically Integrated Projects (VIP)

Vertically integrated projects are typically interdisciplinary efforts led by a faculty mentor. After approaching the faculty member and joining the VIP team, students are enrolled in a course, much in the style of an independent study course.

- You must (1) give a public presentation or exhibition of your project, (2) produce a written report about it, approved by your faculty mentor as demonstrating the substance and quality expected of undergraduate, honors-level work, and (3) submit your report to the Honors Office.
- The VIP experience cannot fulfill an activity that is named by your home program as a requirement (*e.g.*, required co-op, required internship, required capstone, *et cetera*).
- Points are awarded according to credits, with a maximum of 3 points per semester.

Competitive Fellowships and Awards

One point is earned by completing an application for an eligible international fellowship through RIT Global. Eligible programs include the Marshall, Mitchell, Rhodes, Schwarzman, Churchill, and Fulbright (full, not summer). If you have questions, please check with RIT Global.

- At most 1 point, total

Coached Entrepreneurship Experiences

Points are determined by a Coach from the RIT Simone Center, based on entrepreneurial waypoints (progress toward creation of a company) and participation in designated experiences that foster entrepreneurship such as the Simone Center IdeaLab.

- At most 3 points, total

Non-required Co-op or Internship

Points are earned for experiential learning such as co-op or internship that is undertaken beyond the experiential learning requirements of your degree program.

- Note the word “beyond” in the previous sentence. You can earn points in this category only after completing the experiential learning requirement for your degree program.
- Your college must formally recognize your work as both (1) falling within your program’s definition of co-op/internship, and (2) beyond the experiential learning requirements of your program.
- If you are completing a double-major (e.g., Applied Mathematics *and* Photography), one major is designated as *primary* in the RIT computer system. The language above refers to that major.
- Points are earned as follows:
 - 1–3 full weeks of full-time work earns 1 point
 - 4–9 full weeks of full-time work earns 2 points
 - 10 full weeks or more of full-time work earns 3 points
- At most 3 points, total²

² With input from your home department, the Honors Program will consider petitions to accept a second such co-op. Petitions must explain why the second co-op/internship offers distinct advantages not afforded by the first additional co-op/internship, and the circumstances must be compelling.

Non-required Study Abroad or Work Abroad

Points are awarded for successful completion of international academic experiences affiliated with a university, based on the duration of the experience (see below).

- This activity must be recognized and recorded by RIT, either through RIT Global (the Study Abroad office) or the Office of Career Services and Co-op.
- If you are completing a double-major (e.g., Mechanical Engineering *and* Applied Modern Language and Culture), one major is designated as *primary* in the RIT computer system, and that major is used to determine whether international work and/or study is required.
- Points are earned as follows:
 - 1–3 full weeks in country earns 1 point
 - 4–7 full weeks in country earns 2 points
 - 8 or more full weeks in country earns 3 points
- If the international travel is part of an honors course, you will earn the larger of the available points (e.g., the honors points associated with the course, or the honors points listed here, but not both).
- At most 3 points, total

Non-required RIT-Sponsored Study Away

Whereas study abroad refers to international experiences, the term *study away* refers to domestic experiences. Points are awarded for successful completion of study away experiences *sponsored by RIT*, based on the duration of the experience (see below).

- This activity must be recognized and recorded by RIT.
- If you are completing a double-major (e.g., Mechanical Engineering *and* Applied Modern Language and Culture), one major is designated as *primary* in the RIT computer system, and that major is used to determine whether study away is required.
 - If this travel experience is part of an honors course, you will earn the larger of the available points (e.g., the honors points associated with the course, or the honors points listed here, but not both).
- Points are earned as follows:
 - 1–3 full weeks earns 1 point
 - 4–9 full weeks earns 2 points

- 10 full weeks or more earns 3 points
- At most 3 points, total

Honors Achievement in the Discipline

Students in the Honors Program develop an extra layer of depth in their chosen fields by doing honors-level work that accelerates them toward the frontiers of knowledge, culture, and technology while engaging in positive, collegial relationships with faculty mentors. Students can fulfill this requirement by successfully completing **any** of the experiences listed below the following important notes.

- **Note 1:** In this context, the word *discipline* means the branch of knowledge in which your major is found (not your minor, not your immersion). As a practical matter, the faculty of your home program decide what is in the discipline.
- **Note 2:** If you are completing a double major, you are expected to complete this facet of your honors work for your *primary* major.
- **Note 3:** Your honors work in the discipline must total at least 3 points but may come from a collection of experiences rather than a single academic achievement.

We strongly recommend that you contact the office at honors@rit.edu or your college advocate if you have questions, or just want advice from people who care about your success.

Faculty-mentored research in your discipline

Research is understood broadly to include investigative, exploratory, creative, and innovative works.

- Only research done in or after your third year can fulfill the discipline requirement (if it were a course, it would be 300-level or higher). However, as mentioned above, research activity can also earn honors points in the elective category.
- How do you know if a research project is “in your discipline”? Talk to people. Ask a professor in your home program or ask your college Honors Advocate to direct you to the right people. Here are some surefire ways to make sure that your work is in your discipline:
 - Work with a faculty mentor *from your home department*. You might have more than one faculty mentor, perhaps from different departments. That’s okay.
 - Have the Head (or Associate Head) of your home program write an email to the Honors Program telling us that the research is in your discipline.

- Other requirements were itemized previously. They include a required presentation of your work and a high-quality written report appropriate to your discipline. The report must be submitted to the Honors Program office before points can be awarded.

Honors option in an upper-division course in your discipline

- Such a course must carry at least 3 credits and must be at the 300-level or above.
- The course may be either required or a program elective.

Graduate Course in your discipline

- Please check with the Honors Program Office!
- Such a course must carry at least 3 credits.
- There is a cap on the number of graduate courses that can be applied to fulfilling honors requirements. See the previous note about graduate course work.

Upper-division honors course in your discipline

- Such a course must carry at least 3 credits and must be at the 300-level or above.

Points Submission Window

Honors points must be submitted within one semester of completion, and ideally in the same semester. To submit honors points, see the User Tools page of the Honors Program web site.

Overview of Complementary Learning (CL)

Some kinds of learning are best accomplished outside the classroom, so an important part of the Honors Program is participation in activities that complement traditional academic work.

Categories of Complementary Learning

Complementary learning activities often involve volunteering your time and talents with non-profit organizations for the benefit of others. Activities for which you can earn honors points (professional development, academic achievement, etc.) are typically not complementary learning.

Service and Volunteerism

Service and volunteerism must be sanctioned by a non-profit organization (typically designated as a 501c3 organization for tax purposes) whether you do it with the organization or on its behalf, and service is not paid or compensated in any way.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Any event organized by the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement
- Volunteering at an animal shelter, or a soup kitchen, or a literacy program at your local library, or volunteering with Pick up the Parks or Habitat for Humanity
- Organizing a food or toiletries drive and delivering the collected goods.

- Staffing a blood drive or a 5k-race to benefit a non-profit organization or staffing a table at Relay for Life.

Non-examples include (but are not limited to):

- Giving blood (different than staffing!)
- Running in a 5k Race (different than staffing the race!)
- Tutoring a friend
- Working for your local library is not direct service if you are paid for your time or compensated in any way.
- Raking your elderly neighbor's leaves as an individual act of kindness rather than work with or on behalf of a non-profit organization

Note: **preparing** to serve is different than serving. Preparation (training, rehearsal, creation of materials) is typically not recognized.

- Volunteering your time as a firefighter **is** recognized as complementary learning because you are donating your time and energy to a public institution (which is non-profit). However, the boot camp training that you must complete in preparation does **not** count.
- Volunteering your musical talent at an event that supports a non-profit organization **is** recognized as complementary learning, but the rehearsals leading up to that event are **not** (they are a kind of training).

Leadership and Citizenship

Many leadership activities are recognized as complementary learning.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Successful completion of a *Momentum* program offered by the CLCE
- Time spent actively engaged in an executive board position for a student club (e.g., formal elected positions such as President, Vice President, Treasurer).
- Time engaged in the responsibilities of an officer, delegate, or representative to the Honors Council or the RIT Student Government
- Volunteering for a political campaign

Non-examples include (but are not limited to):

- Leadership roles in faculty-mentored academic research groups (this is an activity that can earn honors points, and is professional development)
- Manager roles in on-campus employment (this is a paid position)
- Time spent making signs in preparation for a rally
- Paid positions for political campaigns

Participation in the Intellectual and Cultural Life of RIT

This category of activity involves participating in events that are designated by the Honors Program as complementary learning. You should look for these activities in the weekly email from the Honors Program.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Volunteering at the fall research symposium, spring gala, or open houses
- Participating in service events run by the Honors Council
- Alternative Break organized by the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement
- New Horizons events through the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement
- The Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement *Momentum* program
- The annual Fram Critical Thinking lecture
- Attending RIT's Expressions of King's Legacy events
- Participating in the No Voice Zone events
- College-level speakers in your college (different than department-level talks)

Non-examples include (but are not limited to):

- Simply attending the spring gala
- Simply attending Student Government meetings

Designated Roles (OL, RA)

Paid positions are almost never recognized as complementary learning. Here is the list of exceptions:

- **Orientation Leaders**, whether working for New Student Orientation or as Honors Mentors, are credited with **15 hours** per year for their contribution to building the community.
- **Resident Assistants** are credited **15 hours** of complementary learning in recognition of the unpaid time spent helping others on behalf of RIT.

Categories Outside of Complementary Learning

In addition to the non-examples listed previously, there are broad categories of activity that are almost always outside the scope of complementary learning. If you have any questions, please email honorscomplearning@rit.edu.

Academic Pursuit is not Complementary Learning

Time that you spend furthering your academic knowledge, including participation as an investigator in a research project, is not recognized as complementary learning. (However, faculty-mentored research counts as honors points!)

Compensated Time is not Complementary Learning

Excepting the special roles described above, activity is not recognized as complementary learning if you are paid for your time, effort, or skill in any way. This includes prizes wages, payment in kind, stipends, and scholarships, reimbursements, etc. If you have questions, ask!

Conflicted Time is not Complementary Learning

The word *conflicted* is not an emotional state, as used here. Rather, we mean that activity is not recognized as complementary learning if it is or appears to be a conflict of interest (e.g., appears to have a transactional nature). Also included under this umbrella are activities that might reasonably be described as coerced. For example, imagine that a student's professor asks them to do a favor during the semester. Questions arise immediately...

- Is the student hoping to affect their grade in a positive way? (*Perceived transaction is a deal breaker, whether real or not.*)
- Do they fear an unfavorable effect on their grade if they don't help? (*Perceived coercion is a deal breaker, whether real or not.*)
- Is the student just being a helpful, and following their own interest in developing positive professional relationships with faculty? (*Great!*)

As a practical matter, rather than struggling to understand and evaluate the nuances of such situations, the Honors Program simply disqualifies them from consideration.

Activism is not Complementary Learning

The word activism refers to activities that promote or educate about an organization that is not registered as a non-profit (i.e., not 501c3). *You should be paid if you are doing work for a company*, even if you think the company is great and that it contributes to the good of society.

Direct Philanthropy is not Complementary Learning

Direct philanthropy means giving gifts to a charitable or non-profit organization, often but not always monetary in nature. (This is something that you might do because you want to make the world a better place. That's good. Do that, even though it's not complementary learning.)

Examples of direct philanthropy include (but are not limited to):

- Donating money to a church, political campaign, or crowdfunding campaign
- Giving household items to Goodwill
- Giving food or toiletries to collection drives

Illegal and Rehabilitative Activity is not Complementary Learning

Activity is not recognized as complementary learning if it is illegal. Nor is it recognized if completed due to a mandate from the Center for Student Conduct, or a local, state, or federal court or agency.

Reporting Complementary Learning

Your reporting should be contemporaneous with your activity. Rather than collecting a single long list of activities to report at the end of the year, report activities in the same week they are done (or as soon as possible, but no later than 31 days after the event).

- To report your complementary learning:
 - Navigate to <https://www.rit.edu/honors/>
 - Click on User Tools
 - Click the button that says “Submit Complementary Learning”
- Service to or with the Honors Program, including participation in activities organized by the Honors Council or the Honors Program Office, the event organizer will communicate your name to the Honors Program office along with a description of the event and the number of hours that you contributed. The Honors Program office will record these hours for you.
- During the reporting process you will be asked to identify a reference who can talk to us about your participation in the event. Do not list yourself as the reference.

Double-Major

When students choose to pursue a double-major, questions about requirements are answered relative to the major that has been declared as *primary*. (For example, is a co-op required or non-required? The answer depends on which major is designated as primary.)

Combined Accelerated BS/MS

Some students’ matriculation status changes from undergraduate to graduate (*e.g.*, students in an accelerated BS/MS program).

- The transition to graduate status occurs in the semester after you complete enough credits to meet the required count for your undergraduate degree. (This varies by degree program. See your academic advisor!) For example, if your undergraduate degree program requires 120 credits and your cumulative total of credits rises to 122 in the fall semester, you will be a graduate student in the spring semester.

- Your CL expectation for a year has nothing to do with your matriculation status. It is tied only to whether your academic requirements are complete at the start of an academic year ([click here](#)).
- In the semester that you become a graduate student you will begin earning a GPA for your graduate career. This is separate from your undergraduate career GPA, which is the number used by the Honors Program when evaluating your standing and certifying your completion of the Honors Program.
- Undergraduate students in the Honors Program enjoy the benefit of enrolling in up to 24 credits at no additional cost (two extra courses per semester). This benefit terminates if your matriculation status changes from undergraduate to graduate.

Cohort and Year Level

For administrative purposes, students in the RIT Honors Program are assigned to a cohort, identified by the academic year in which they enter. Each cohort includes the group of first-year students who enter in the fall, and the group of students who enter the program through the Internal Admission process in the spring.

Year-Level

When comparing academic performance to GPA standards (which rise from one year to the next), a student's "year level" is based on the year that the student matriculated into RIT, not the year in which the student entered the Honors Program.

Internal Admission (IA)

Except for the Honors First Year Seminar, students who enter the RIT Honors Program through the Internal Admission process are expected to meet the academic requirements specified for their cohort year.

Honors Grants

Each student in the RIT Honors Program is eligible for up to \$500 in grant funding (as a one-time expense, or as multiple smaller expenses) to support activities that lead to honors points.

- Only students in good standing with the Honors Program can access Honors Grants.
- Allowable expenses associated with professional development, and honors-related travel:
 - Travel for professional development conferences
 - Travel for study abroad, with the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement, or as part of an honors college-cohort. (If by car, RIT standard mileage rate applies.)

- Successful completion of micro-credentials/certifications recognized as professional development (proof of successful completion is required in addition to receipts for cost)
- Allowable expenses leading to honors points:
 - Materials for honors courses or options (not standard course-related costs)
 - Materials for research (i.e., not part of a class). Honors Grant money may be used to purchase supplies for extracurricular faculty-mentored research and honors options, but any items that are not consumed by the research become the property of RIT if they were purchased (in whole or in part) with Honors Grant money. For that reason, any student who applies to use grant money in this way will be required to provide a letter of support from a faculty member in which the faculty member agrees to assume responsibility for any unused supplies that are purchased (in part or in full) with Honors Grant money.
- Honors Grants are paid as reimbursements of eligible receipts.
 - Receipts must be itemized and presented to the Honors Program.
 - RIT cannot reimburse for tax or alcohol on receipts.
 - You are expected to provide a table that lists the total on each itemized receipt, the tax on each, the amount from alcohol on each, a net total of allowable expense (tax and alcohol subtracted from each receipt's total), and a net total.
- The use of Honors Grant money must be approved in advance.
- Honors Grant money may not be used to cover standard college-related costs such as tuition, books, materials, online subscriptions, kits, or tools; nor does it cover living expenses such as rent, food, or fuel.
- Honors Grant money may not be used for events that happen after a student's graduation, even if expenditures are incurred before graduation.
- Honors Grant money may not be used to subsidize others' activities (e.g., treating a friend to coffee at a conference).

Leave of Absence

An official leave of absence (LOA) from the university is a pause in a student's pursuit of a degree from RIT. This pause extends to all aspects of education. For this reason, the complementary learning requirement will be prorated according to when a student takes the LOA and for how long.

For example, a student who takes a half-year LOA is responsible for half of the year's complementary learning hours. A student who takes a year-long LOA is exempted from that

year's complementary learning requirement. If you are considering a LOA, contact the Honors Office to confirm the specifics of your complementary learning requirement.

Co-op and Study Abroad

Students who are on co-op, or who are engaging in an extended study abroad experience are understood to be actively pursuing a degree from RIT. They are responsible for completing the annual complementary learning requirement.

Conduct-Related Disciplinary Action

The RIT Honors Program takes seriously students' impact on the community, and their role as representatives of the university and the Honors Program. Students who accept the invitation to become part of the RIT Honors Program agree to conduct themselves with integrity in a manner that maintains our university and society as a safe place that fosters creativity, curiosity, constructive change, and free expression.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action **for conduct** if found responsible for a breach of RIT policy. Behaviors subject to disciplinary action broadly include but are not limited to:

- Behaviors that harm others such as bullying, hazing, harassment, intimidation, or discrimination, violence, theft.
- Behaviors classified broadly as dishonest such as academic dishonesty, the submission of fraudulent forms to any part of the university (*e.g.*, proof of vaccination status, reports of complementary learning activity, forms related to honors options, study abroad, inappropriate use of Honors Grant money *et cetera*).

Students who are issued a status of probation by the university for conduct-related issues or who are found responsible for academic dishonesty may be withdrawn from the RIT Honors Program. Any student who is issued a status of suspension or expulsion due to academic or conduct-related issues forfeits their place in the RIT Honors Program.

In response to lower-level findings, disciplinary action may include forfeiture of points, complementary learning hours, leadership roles (*e.g.*, if a member of the Honors Council), or downgrade of standing in the Program.

Appeals

Withdrawal decisions may be appealed. The appeal must arrive at the Honors Office in the same term as the withdrawal decision is communicated (*i.e.*, whether fall, spring, or summer

semester, appeals must arrive on or before the last day of that semester's final exam period). The appeal should clearly and concisely explain why the decision should be reversed.

- **Appeal of Withdrawal Due to Insufficient-Progress (GPA, Points, CL)**

Reversal of withdrawal due to insufficient progress is at the discretion of the Director of the Honors Program and will be made in consultation with the Assistant Director of the Honors Program. The student's academic advisor, the Honors Advocate of the student's home college, and others may be consulted. Reinstatement, if deemed appropriate, may be tied to completion of activities and meeting specified academic standards.

- **Appeal of Withdrawal Due to Conduct**

Appeals of withdrawal due to disciplinary action for conduct will be decided by a Review Committee convened by the director of the Honors Program. The Review Committee should include at least three members, at least one of which is a faculty member and at least one of which is an Honors Advocate. Reversing the withdrawal decision requires a majority vote (at least 51%) of the Review Committee members.

Policy Changes

This document is reviewed regularly to make clarifications and refinements. All student activity formally initiated after an update is subject to its changes.