WENTWORTH INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY HONORS PROGRAM

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MISSION

Cultivate a community of academically exceptional and intellectually curious students and empower them to become innovative problem solvers, engaged global citizens, and critical thinkers.

PURPOSE

The Honors Program at Wentworth Institute of Technology is to provide a challenging and enriching educational experience that goes beyond the traditional classroom setting. The program fosters a culture of intellectual curiosity, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning among its participants. By offering unique opportunities for research, community engagement, global engagement, and leadership, the program equips students with the skills, knowledge, and values needed to make meaningful contributions to their fields of study and society at large.

OVERARCHING GOALS

- *Academic Excellence:* Foster a culture of academic excellence by providing challenging coursework, encouraging intellectual curiosity, and supporting research opportunities.

- *Interdisciplinary Collaboration:* Promote interdisciplinary collaboration by creating spaces for students to engage with diverse perspectives and integrate knowledge from various disciplines.

- *Research and Innovation:* Support and encourage research initiatives, creative projects, and innovation to empower students to contribute original ideas and solutions to real-world challenges.

- *Global Citizenship:* Cultivate a sense of global citizenship by encouraging students to explore international perspectives, engage in cross-cultural experiences, and contribute to global issues through research or service projects.

- *Community Engagement:* Foster a strong sense of community engagement by promoting service-learning projects and encouraging students to apply their knowledge and skills to address local and global societal needs.

- *Leadership Skills:* Develop leadership skills by providing opportunities for students to take on leadership roles within the program, participate in community initiatives, and engage in collaborative projects.

PROGRAMMING FOR HONORS STUDENTS

The Honors Program incorporates the following components to realize its objectives. Schools have the flexibility to select from this list in order to tailor the honors program for their students.

A school's honors program may encompass either all these components or a specific subset thereof. Each school's honors Program plan is outlined in the Appendix of this document.

A. Undergraduate Research

This component of the Honors Program engages honors students in interdisciplinary and/or independent research projects through:

- Faculty mentorship to actively engage students in such research projects.

- Offering workshops on various research methodologies, data analysis techniques, and academic writing skills to equip students with the tools necessary for successful independent research.

- Educating honors students on research ethics, ensuring they conduct their projects responsibly and ethically.

- Maker spaces and opportunities for students to explore diverse perspectives and integrate knowledge from various disciplines.

- Establishment of networks, partnerships, and outreach programs with local industries, research institutions, businesses government agencies, and nonprofit organizations to enhance research opportunities and internships for honors students. This includes fostering connections with professionals in various fields to provide real-world projects for students and promote interactions between students and professionals.

- Connecting honors students with alumni who have excelled in research or related fields for mentorship and guidance.

- Organizing a series of talks by professionals from various industries to expose honors students to real-world applications of their research and to inspire them in their academic and career pursuits.

- Forming interdisciplinary research teams comprising honors students from different majors to work on complex projects. This fosters collaboration and the integration of diverse perspectives.

- Implementing a peer mentoring system where more experienced honors students mentor newer ones, creating a supportive community and sharing knowledge about the research process.

- Hosting a community-focused research symposium where honors students present their research findings. This provides a platform for dialogue between students and the WIT community.

- Creating a platform for honors students to publish their research findings in a dedicated undergraduate research journal or collaborate with existing academic journals.

- Implementing an undergraduate research portfolio requirement for this component of the Honors Program where students document their research experiences, reflections, and skills acquired throughout the honors program.

B. Community Engagement

This component of the Honors Program focuses on engaging honors students in community service and outreach activities through community building among honors students and through:

- Conducting workshops that focus on civic engagement, community organizing, and social responsibility. These workshops can empower honors students with the skills needed to initiate positive change in their communities.

- Service-learning projects that provide students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to address local and global societal needs.

- Establishing partnerships with local non-profit organizations, schools, or community centers. This will provide honors students with opportunities to work closely with these organizations on projects that align with their academic interests and the community's needs.

- Organizing service-learning trips that allow honors students to apply their skills and knowledge in real-world settings. This could include trips to underserved areas or communities facing specific challenges.

- Arranging panel discussions featuring honors students who have engaged in impactful community projects. This can inspire others and showcase the positive contributions of honors students to the wider community.

- Exploring how technology can be leveraged for social impact. This might involve developing apps, websites, or other technological solutions to address community needs or enhance communication within the community.

- Implementing a community engagement portfolio requirement for this component of the Honors Program where students document their community service experiences, reflections, and skills acquired throughout the honors program.

C. Leadership

This component of the Honors Program focuses on leadership development to prepare honors students for future roles in academia, industry, or community service through:

- Providing mentorship, skill-building workshops, and opportunities for them to take on leadership roles within the program, participate in community initiatives, and engage in collaborative projects.

- Organizing leadership retreats where honors students can engage in team-building activities, strategic planning, and self-reflection.

- Providing opportunities for students to shadow leaders, engage in projects, and gain insights into leadership in the workplace.

- Establishing a regular speaker series featuring leaders from academia, industry, community service, and successful alumni to share their leadership journeys and insights and to allow students to interact with speakers through Q&A sessions, networking events, or small group discussions.

- Creating projects that require collaboration with students from other fields, fostering teamwork and adaptability.

- Establishing peer mentorship pairing experienced honors students with newer members to share insights and advice and include training sessions for mentors to develop their leadership and mentoring skills.

- Implementing a leadership portfolio requirement for this component of the Honors Program where students document their leadership experiences, reflections, and skills acquired throughout the honors program.

D. Global Engagement

This component of the Honors Program focuses on global engagement to explore international perspectives, engage in cross-cultural experiences, and contribute to global issues through:

- Facilitating international research experiences for honors students, allowing them to engage in cross-cultural research projects and broaden their understanding of global issues.

- Fostering partnerships with universities or research institutions in different countries, allowing honors students to engage in collaborative research projects that address global challenges.

- Facilitating cultural exchange programs where honors students can spend a semester at a partner university, fully immersing themselves in the local culture and academic environment.

- Partnering with multinational corporations or international business organizations and tech companies or innovation hubs to offer internships that focus on global business strategies and provide them with insights into global technological advancements and innovations.

- Developing programs that allow honors students to explore and contribute to global art and cultural projects. This could involve collaborations with international artists, museums, or cultural institutions.

- Implementing a global engagement portfolio requirement for this component of the Honors Program where students document their global engagement experiences, reflections, and skills acquired throughout the honors program.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

The following criteria will be considered in admitting students to the Honors Program:

- *Academic Excellence:*
  - High GPA
  - Class Rank in graduating class
  - Extracurricular Activities and Leadership
  - Advanced Placement (AP) or Honors Courses

MATRICULATION AND CONTINUATION IN THE HONORS PROGRAM

Honors Students are matriculated into the program during orientation. Matriculated students must follow the path outlined in the table below. Attending Honors Events during the summer term counts toward Fall Semester requirements.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

FIRST YEAR	SOPHOMORE	JUNIOR	SENIOR
• MAINTAIN 3.3 CUM GPA • ATTEND X HONORS EVENTS EACH SEMESTER	• MAINTAIN 3.3 CUM GPA • ATTEND X HONORS EVENTS EACH SEMESTER	• MAINTAIN 3.3 CUM GPA • ATTEND X HONORS EVENTS EACH SEMESTER	• MAINTAIN 3.3 CUM GPA • ATTEND X HONORS EVENTS EACH SEMESTER

HONORS PROGRAM ADMISSION FOR CURRENT WIT STUDENTS

Eligibility and Invitation

- WIT students who meet the GPA requirement will be contacted via email and invited to affiliate with the Honors Program.

- Eligible students include current sophomores, juniors, seniors, and transfer students.

- Invitations are typically issued toward the end of the Fall semester.

- Sophomores and juniors must have an established WIT GPA based on at least two semesters of coursework.

Application Process

- To affiliate with the Honors Program, invited students must:
  - Attend the required number of Honors events during one semester.
  - Complete and submit the Honors Program Affiliation Form.

- Students who successfully complete these requirements will be recognized as members of the WIT Honors Program.

Program Requirements for Affiliated Members
- Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.3.
- Attend the required number of Honors events each semester.

Deferral Policy
- Students engaged in co-op, study abroad, or other WIT-affiliated opportunities may defer their application and affiliate with the program during the next cycle (Fall semester).

Exemption Policy
- Honors students participating in co-op, study abroad, or other WIT-affiliated opportunities are exempt from attending Honors Program events during that semester.
- Students must submit the Honors Event Exemption Form to document their status.

FACULTY COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR HONORS STUDENTS

Honors students should choose activities that align both with the overall Honors Program and with their school's designated expectations outlined in the Appendix. In support of the Honors Program mission to cultivate academic excellence, interdisciplinary collaboration, and research innovation, honors students are encouraged to collaborate with faculty in the following ways:

- *Enroll in Honors Academic Courses:* Participate in advanced coursework designed to challenge and enrich the academic experience.
- *Independent Study:* Work directly with faculty on individualized projects that foster intellectual curiosity and creativity.
- *Research Projects:* Collaborate with faculty on research initiatives that contribute original ideas and solutions to real-world challenges.
- *Research Assistantship or Tutoring:* Serve as a research assistant or tutor under faculty guidance, strengthening both academic and leadership skills.
- *Small Group Research Collaboration:* Work with faculty and fellow honors students on interdisciplinary research projects that promote teamwork and diverse perspectives.
- *Research Fairs and Symposia:* Present research findings at Wentworth and Colleges of the Fenway research fairs, contributing to the broader academic community.

These opportunities directly support the Honors Program's overarching goals:

- *Academic Excellence* through rigorous coursework and independent study.
- *Interdisciplinary Collaboration* via group research projects and co-op experiences.

- *Research and Innovation* through faculty-led projects and assistantships.

- *Community Engagement* by sharing research at symposia and fairs.

- *Leadership Development* through tutoring and peer collaboration.

- *Global Citizenship* when research projects or co-ops involve international or cross-cultural perspectives.

WHAT DISTINGUISHES AN HONORS ACADEMIC COURSE

There is no single model for an honors class; however, there are important characteristics that distinguish an honors section from a non-honors class:

- *Intellectual challenge:* Honors classes should emphasize content and activities that stimulate students to think about topics in new ways, explore subject matter in greater depth or breadth, or gain first-hand exposure to issues through experiential learning.

- *Quality, not quantity:* Honors classes do not simply load on more assignments. Honors classes should not involve substantial extra work when compared with a non-Honors class. The emphasis in Honors classes should be on exploring the subject matter a little more thoroughly.

- *Interactivity:* Honors courses often involve much more student-faculty interaction than a typical non-Honors course. While the format of the course is left to the discretion of the instructor, student participation is generally greater in an Honors classroom.

- *Faculty accessibility:* Honors courses are all taught by experienced full-time faculty members. Honors students are more likely to seek out faculty for detailed feedback on their work and for mentoring advice on their academic and career aspirations; having faculty who are present and committed to the institution is essential.

- *Distinctive:* Honors courses are distinct from the non-Honors courses in substance and/or teaching methods. Faculty members have discretion to determine what will be different about their Honors section. Distinctive features might include one or more of the following:

    a. *Greater breadth of topics*: The addition of topics that are not covered in a non-Honors version of the course. This might include readings, lectures, assignments, activities, field trips, or out of class experiences unique to the Honors course.

    b. *Greater depth on selected topics*: More in-depth treatment of a particular topic or topics. This might include readings, lectures, assignments, activities, field trips, or out of class experiences unique to the Honors course.

c. *Pedagogical techniques unique to the Honors course*: Such as case studies, peer-teaching or discussion-leading, flipped classrooms, experiential or service learning, or essay questions rather than multiple choice exams.

d. *Connection to mission*: Deeper exploration between the content of course and the essential learning outcomes, particularly using critical thinking and creativity to be adaptive and grow to meet the challenges of the future.

e. *Higher standards in grading*: Such as requirements for more references in a research essay, fewer grammatical errors in written work, or greater evidence of creative or critical thinking.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Honors courses should meet one or more Learning Outcomes from each of the following areas:

Research
➤ *Analyze* existing research to foster intellectual curiosity and innovation within the discipline.

➤ *Formulate* innovative research questions that contribute to the advancement of knowledge.

➤ *Demonstrate* a commitment to lifelong learning by integrating current research findings into ongoing professional development.

Leadership
➤ *Design* creative strategies for addressing complex problems within professional contexts.

➤ *Apply* advanced problem-solving techniques to make informed, effective decisions.

➤ *Evaluate* the effectiveness of leadership decisions using critical thinking and creative analysis.

Collaboration
➤ *Implement* effective collaborative practices within disciplinary and inter-disciplinary teams.

➤ *Facilitate* interdisciplinary collaboration to achieve comprehensive and innovative solutions to complex issues.

➤ *Assess* the outcomes of disciplinary and inter-disciplinary teamwork, identifying areas for continuous improvement.

HONORS PROGRAM PROBATIONARY STATUS

GPA Requirement

- Honors students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher.

- Students whose GPA falls below 3.3 will be placed on probation and granted two semesters to raise their GPA to the required level.

Program Participation Requirement

- Honors students are expected to meet all program requirements each semester and academic year, including attendance at Honors events and completion of academic components.

- Students who fail to meet these requirements will be placed on probation and expected to fully satisfy all requirements going forward.

High School Admits

- Students admitted to the Honors Program during high school must establish and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher throughout all four years.

- If a student's GPA falls below 3.3 during their final two semesters at WIT, they may still graduate as a member of the Honors Program provided their cumulative GPA is 3.0 or higher.

WIT Admits

- Students who affiliate with the Honors Program after matriculating at WIT must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher to retain active status.

- Students whose GPA falls below 3.3 will not be considered active members of the Honors Program.

HONORS PROGRAM BENEFITS FOR ACTIVE STUDENTS

Honors students who maintain active status in the WIT Honors Program are eligible for the following benefits:

- *Housing Opportunity:* Eligibility to live in the Honors Program Thematic Community (available to students selected through the Wentworth admissions process only).

- *Book Award/Scholarship:* Beginning with the Class of 2029, select students admitted through the Wentworth admissions process will receive a book award or scholarship.

- *Priority Academic Registration:* Early access to academic course registration each semester.

- *Career Development Access:* Early entry to co-op placements and career fairs.

RECOGNITION OF ACTIVE HONORS STUDENTS

Honors students who maintain active status in the WIT Honors Program will be formally recognized at the end of each academic year. Active status is defined by meeting all program requirements, including GPA and event participation. Recognition will include the following items:

- Honors Program Sticker
- Honors Program Pin
- Honors Program Polo

In addition, during the senior year, students will receive:

- Senior Gift
- Honors Program Medallion to be worn with graduation regalia

HONORS PROGRAM LINKS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Students are encouraged to stay connected with the WIT Honors Program through the following official platforms and resources:

- WIT HONORS PROGRAM WEBPAGE
- WIT HONORS PROGRAM LINKEDIN GROUP
- WIT HONORS PROGRAM INSTAGRAM
- RESIDENTIAL THEMATIC COMMUNITIES | WENTWORTH
- Preferred Hashtag: #WITHONORSPROGRAM

APPENDIX: SCHOOL-SPECIFIC HONORS PROGRAM PLANS

1. SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN HONORS PROGRAM PLAN

The School of Architecture and Design Honors Program encompasses the following component(s):

Undergraduate Research

- **Cross-disciplinary "pecha-kucha" presentations** – extracurricular session for Honors students to present their design work to one another across the different disciplines.

- **Undergraduate research** – provide research opportunities through *Community Design and Research Center* (CDRC).

- **Cross-disciplinary portfolio workshop** – geared towards sophomores as they prepare for their first co-op; the Honors cohort could test-pilot workshop format/logistics later introduced to all students. Benefits: spreading portfolio-building skills.

- **SoAD Lecture Series** – regularly participate SoAD Lecture Series.

Community Engagement

- **One-week design-build project with faculty or local artist/alum** – planned for spring break or inter-term break; needs budget. Benefits: hands-on experience with skills that may be shared via peer mentoring.

- **Interdisciplinary tour of Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library** – a one-day activity focusing on special collection of maps, introducing students to a valuable (and publicly accessible) resource for scholars of the built environment. Benefits to broader population: raising awareness of public resources.

Leadership

- **University-wide seminar on academic success** – non-credit, up to three sessions offered in the early part of freshman fall and/or spring term, with focus on defining 21st-century academic success. Discussion and debate among students from different programs across the campus, led by faculty and/or Success Studio tutors. Benefits to broader population: feedback on student experience, strategizing for student success.

- **Wentworth Design Review** – participating in an interdisciplinary student club that publishes the best work of our students and faculty to advance intellectual growth.

- **Exploratory Design track** – serving as embedded tutors in our interdisciplinary first-year design studio and drawing course.

2. SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING HONORS PROGRAM PLAN

The School of Engineering Honors Program encompasses the following component(s):

Undergraduate Research

Research & Innovation: Honors Program students will *successfully* conclude an undergraduate research thesis by the time of graduation.

- The research thesis is supervised by a faculty member or a group of faculty members if the work is interdisciplinary (there must be at least one SoE faculty member in the team if there is more than one faculty member involved). Faculty members in charge will monitor the progress of the assigned work.

- The undergraduate thesis will include 6 credits equivalent to 1 Technical Elective Course (3 or 4-credit course) + Extra Credits.

- A report/write-up for the research thesis should be submitted to the SoE Dean's office at the end of the graduating semester (i.e., last summer semester).

- A draft of a professional paper according to the respective disciplines' professional writing guidelines (e.g., IEEE for Electrical and Computer Engineering) should also be submitted in addition to the report.

- The faculty mentors will evaluate the successful completion of the thesis.

Community Engagement

Honors Program members serve as paid tutors – Tutoring, in the form of recitation sessions, will be beneficial to students who may require additional academic help.

- The tutoring sessions can be mainly scheduled in the evening to avoid class schedule conflicts and increase students' attendance.

- Tutoring placements can be done according to students' request, and/or instructor's suggestion.

- Student tutors must be working closely with the respective course instructors to conduct the recitation sessions effectively. Student tutors will receive the required materials from the course instructors.

- A list of courses that need tutors will be compiled prior to every semester.

Lab Support: Honors Program students serve as paid peer lab support. This proposal can be initially performed as a pilot project for a limited time (e.g., one or two years). Students' success will be measured at the end of the piloted project to justify future steps.

Leadership

- Serving on the executive board (e-board) of a professional society (e.g., President, Vice President, Treasurer, Webmaster).

- Active participation in at least one engineering society (e.g., Tau Beta Pi, MSCE, IEEE, IEEE Eta Kappa Nu, NSBE, SME, AFS, ASME).

- On-campus Leadership: Leading extra-curricular activities on campus such as workshops and research-focused journal clubs.

- Serving actively in WIT's Accelerate, holding student leadership positions.

- Conducting outstanding internal or external service activities such as:
  - Service to the community (e.g., local outreach programs)
  - Service to a broader community (e.g., nationwide/global outreach programs)

3. SCHOOL OF COMPUTING AND DATA SCIENCE HONORS PROGRAM PLAN

The School of Computing and Data Science Honors Program encompasses the following component(s):

Undergraduate Research
- *Dean's Lecture Series:* Participate in the Dean's lecture series as an attendee and potentially a speaker.

- *Research:* Spearhead a research project under the guidance of a faculty advisor. This project will culminate in a publishable-quality article submitted for peer review at a relevant academic conference (poster, short paper, or full paper format).

- *Academic Performance:* Maintain a GPA of at least B+.

Community Engagement – pick 3
- *Volunteer Tutor:* Contribute to the community by tutoring students on a volunteer basis.

- *Volunteer Tech:* Contribute to the community by assisting others in Accelerate.

- *CO-OP Mentor:* Act as a mentor for new coop students. Share personal experiences, help in resume writing, mockup interviews, etc.

- *Events Volunteer:* Participate in the open house, welcome days, and graduation events.

- *Athletics:* Participate in university sponsored athletics events (local and remote).

Leadership – pick 1
- *Senior Project Judge*: Offer constructive criticism in writing to Senior Project students following their presentations.

- *Club Officer:* Demonstrate leadership in a university sponsored club by either establishing a new officer position or taking on an existing one.

Global Engagement – pick 1

- *Study Abroad:* Pursue a study abroad program to broaden your academic and personal perspectives.

- *Mentor International Students:* This fosters cross-cultural understanding and the sharing of knowledge and creates a welcoming environment for our new international students.

- *Cultural Exchange:* Organize events that bring people from different cultures together to share their music, food, art, and traditions. This can help break down stereotypes and promote understanding.

4. SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT HONORS PROGRAM PLAN

The School of Management Honors Program encompasses the following component(s):

Undergraduate Research

- Work with Faculty Mentorship for interdisciplinary research (SOM funded).

- Complete an honors course on research methodologies, data analysis, and academic writing, plus research ethics (Create course and identify instructor/or current course could have add-on Honor's level work with paid stipend for instructor).

- Present poster research projects (internally or externally).

- Develop an Honor's ePortfolio to showcase and reflect on undergraduate research (required).

Community Engagement

- Attend events on civic engagement and social responsibility.

- Travel on service-learning trips to underserved areas (Campus oriented/work with Eric Miller potentially?).

- Attend Dean's panel discussions featuring impactful community projects.

- Participate/Lead professional mentorship.

- Add to Honor's ePortfolio to showcase and reflect community engagement (required).

Leadership

- Attend Dean's speaker series/panel discussions with leaders from various fields.

- Attend Accelerate workshops based on leadership.

- Attend and participate in a Leadership retreat.

- Add to Honor's ePortfolio to showcase and reflect Leadership (required).

Global Engagement
- Partner with universities and research institutions abroad (study abroad first option choice).

- Complete co-ops with multinational corporations or an international organization (optional).

- Add to ePortfolio to showcase and reflect global engagement.

5. **SCHOOL OF SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES HONORS PROGRAM PLAN**

- The SSH Honor's Program will focus primarily on complementary experiences (fieldtrips, activities, supplemental programming, and mentorship).

- There will be no Honor's Courses.

- The size of our honor's cohort will determine the extent to which there is a "cohort" experience.

- There will likely be overlap and complementary activities shared by the Honors Program, the Innovation Scholars Program, and the Exploratory Track, especially during the first year. Many fieldtrips and activities will be open to participants in all three programs, as we anticipate all three programs will be relatively small, compared to other WIT Schools.