

Program Objectives and Requirements

Honors Program Handbook

Department of English
Stony Brook University

2022-2023

Program Objectives and Requirements

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Objectives

The English Honors Program is a special track within the English major for students with strong academic records. The Program offers small class sizes (no more than 15-18 students in Honors seminars), significant individual interaction with faculty, and advanced-level academic instruction. The Department's objectives for the Honors Program are to identify and mentor motivated, high-achieving students within the major and to help them develop their abilities in a targeted fashion. Honors students will receive a special mention on their diplomas at graduation; graduation with Honors in English signifies that the student maintained a GPA of 3.5 or above in the major, an overall GPA of 3.0 or above, followed a careful program of English Honors courses, and satisfactorily completed a capstone thesis project.

Curricular Requirements

1. All Honors students must complete all curricular requirements for the English major, with the following modifications:

For Honors students who started the EGL major *beginning with* the Fall 2017 semester:

- (a) take TWO Honors seminars: EGL 491 and EGL 492. See the descriptions of these courses in Section 2.
- (b) complete the Honors practicum (EGL 494). See the description of this course in Section 3.
- (c) write an Honors thesis (EGL 496) under the direction of a faculty advisor. See the description of this course in Section 3.

For a complete breakdown of how the Honors Program modifies and adheres to the curricular requirements for the English major, please see Form A at the end of this handbook. Honors students take the same number of credits as regular English majors, with the addition of the Honors practicum (3 extra credits).

In order to remain in good standing in the Program, all Honors students must receive a grade of B+ or higher in two of EGL 491, EGL 492, and EGL 494; the third grade for those courses must be no lower than a B. All Honors students must receive a grade of B+ or higher in EGL 496. At the discretion of the Honors Director, a student who does not meet the minimum grade requirement in any Honors course may be placed on probation for the following semester or may be asked to leave the Honors Program. If a student is placed on

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probation, his/her status in the Honors Program will be reevaluated at the end of that probationary period.

2. In addition to the courses and grades outlined above, to remain in good standing all Honors students must maintain a GPA of 3.5 or above in the major and an overall GPA of 3.0 or above. Should a student's GPA not meet either of those requirements, that student will be placed on probation for the following semester. If the student's GPA does not meet the requirements for good standing at the end of the probationary period, he/she will be asked to leave the Honors Program.

All Honors students will be evaluated at the end of each semester to ensure that they are in good standing.

Other Requirements

1. All Honors students must take EGL 301 either prior to enrolling in EGL 491 and 492, or no later than concurrently with the first of those two courses that the student takes.

2. All Honors students must attend one mandatory Honors Program meeting and one optional Honors event each semester.

3. At the end of each semester, each Honors student will submit to the Honors Director a one-page reflection about his/her work and participation in the Honors Program to date, and, if relevant, about how being in the Program is influencing any post-graduation and/or career plans.

4. After a student has submitted the Honors thesis, in lieu of the one-page reflection he/she will submit to the Honors Director a 3-4 page reflection paper looking back at his/her time in the Honors Program and discussing what he/she has learned from the experience.

To remain in good standing, Honors students must meet all noncurricular requirements in addition to all curricular ones. If a student does not do so, that student will be placed on probation for the following semester. If the student does not meet the noncurricular requirements for good standing at the end of the probationary period, he/she will be asked to leave the Honors Program.

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All Honors students will take two Honors seminars: EGL 491 and EGL 492. Each of these courses will be offered once per academic year, one each semester. They may be taken in any order.

(a) EGL 491: This is a topics course on English literature before 1800.

(b) EGL 492: This is a topics course on American or Anglophone literature.

In addition, Honors students who entered the EGL major *prior to* the Fall 2017 semester must take an enhanced 300-level EGL class, which provides an opportunity for the student to work closely with an EGL faculty member on their reading and writing. For this course, the student undertakes additional reading, meets with the faculty member outside of class a number of times during the semester, and writes a 10-15 page final paper that incorporates an appropriate number of secondary sources. The faculty member agrees to closely supervise the development and writing of the paper in place of the final assignment in the course or as the final assignment, if there is none. See Form D for the requirements for the enhanced 300-level EGL class.

To meet this requirement, a student should consult with his or her professor in a 300-level EGL class no later than the first week of classes, but preferably before the beginning of the semester; should the professor agree, Form D, signed by both the student and the professor, should be submitted to the EGL Undergraduate Advisor. Please note that EGL 301 cannot be used for the enhanced 300-level class.

A student taking an enhanced 300-level class does not receive a grade separate from the grade that he or she receives for doing the regular work of that class, but must receive a grade of B+ or higher in the class for it to count as the Honors requirement. If at all possible, the enhanced 300-level class should be taken no later than concurrently with EGL 494, and preferably earlier.

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The Honors practicum (EGL 494) provides an opportunity for students to explore possible topics for their Honors thesis, and introduces them to proven research and research writing methods for undertaking it. The course is generally offered once per academic year in the Fall semester. Students should enroll in the practicum in the semester immediately prior to the one in which they will write their thesis (and thus will take EGL 496). If a student plans on graduating in a Fall semester, he/she should speak to the Honors Director about the best time to take EGL 494.

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The Honors thesis (EGL 496) represents the capstone of the Honors Program. In this one-semester independent study course, students will write a 30-40 page, argument-driven, analytic research paper, with a minimum of 20 scholarly sources, under the guidance of a faculty advisor on a subject of the student's choice. The scope of the topic should be commensurate to the intended length of the thesis—that is, students should select a topic on which they can successfully research and write a thesis in a single semester.

Choosing a Faculty Advisor

Students are encouraged to select their faculty advisor in consultation with the Honors Director, and are strongly urged to discuss this matter with the Honors Director and their potential faculty advisor in the semester before they will write their thesis. A good advisor is typically someone with whom the student has already worked and has a good working relationship, or someone who is expert in the area of the student's topic, or someone willing to work with the student to develop a topic in his/her area of expertise. A good mentoring relationship is crucial to the success of a thesis.

Choosing a Second Reader

The second reader is a faculty member chosen by the student prior to beginning the thesis whose primary responsibility is to provide an additional opinion on the finished thesis. As such, the student and second reader should consult in advance of the thesis process to ensure that it moves toward a positive end. Second readers should be available for at least two consultations with the student during the thesis writing semester. Ideally, these would occur approximately halfway through the writing process and after a full draft of the thesis has been completed. The reader also should expect to receive and respond to occasional inquiries from the student. A good reader is typically someone with whom the student has already worked and has a good working relationship, or someone who is expert in the area of the student's topic.

Forms and Deadlines

Students must submit Form C, which is required to gain permission to enroll in EGL 496, by the end of the first week of classes of the semester in which they plan to write the thesis, although students should make every effort to submit it earlier than that. Please ensure that you complete all parts of the form and get the appropriate signatures. The completed thesis will be due on the last day of classes.

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Evaluation

Honors theses will be evaluated for a letter grade by the faculty advisor and the second reader. The student's thesis **MUST** be awarded a minimum of a B+ by both readers in order for the student to graduate with Honors. In the event that there is a disagreement between the faculty advisor and second reader about the thesis grade, the Honors Director will act as a third reader and will determine the outcome.

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Advising

All Honors students are encouraged to meet with the Honors Director and the Undergraduate Advisor to keep track of their progress through the Program. For the academic year 2020-2021, please see:

Justin Omar Johnston, Director of the Honors Program
William Martin, Undergraduate Advisor

Joint Programs

Students may simultaneously enroll in the Honors Program and the Teacher Education Program. If you are interested in this option, please discuss this with the Honors Director.

Students enrolled in the Honors College may also enroll in the English Honors Program; in this case, the thesis required for the Honors Program will count as the thesis required for the Honors College. Rather than enrolling in HON 495 and 496 when writing their thesis, Honors College students in the English Honors Program instead enroll in EGL 494 and 496, respectively, and should submit an Honors College departmental thesis form to the Honors College indicating that they are doing so. All the rules for the English Honors Program must be followed in addition to Honors College regulations.

Student Advisory Board

The English Honors Program Student Advisory Board is an annually-elected body of 3-4 Honors Program students. In consultation with all Program students, members of the Advisory Board help develop Program activities, make recommendations to the Honors Director about Program policies, and work with the Honors Director to represent student interests and needs. Elections are held each spring for the following academic year.

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- Form A: English Major with Honors Advising Checklist (*for Honors students who started the EGL major **beginning with** the Fall 2017 semester*)
- Form B: Permission to Enroll in EGL 496 (Honors Thesis)
- Form C: Enrollment in Enhanced 300-level Class

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ENGLISH HONORS MAJOR ADVISING CHECKLIST

(for Honors students who started the EGL major **beginning with** the Fall 2017 semester)

NAME: _____

UNIVERSITY ID: _____

Overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above and a GPA in the major of 3.5 or above must be maintained.

ENGLISH COURSES

EGL 204: Literary Analysis & Argumentation _____,
(Prerequisite to all EGL 300-level courses)

4 Required Survey Courses

A. One early Literature survey course _____,

- i. EGL 205 British Literature I
- ii. EGL 217 American Literature 1

B. EGL 207: The History of the English Language _____,

C. Two survey courses chosen from the following (if not used above) _____, _____.

(All majors must take at least one British literature survey and at least one American literature survey; the third survey can be either British literature or American literature.)

EGL 205: Brit Lit I, EGL 206: Brit Lit II, EGL 217: Amer. Lit I EGL 218: Amer. Lit II EGL 224: 20th C-Lit in English
EGL 226: 20th C- Amer. Lit EGL 243: Shakespeare: Major Works EGL 260: World Mythology EGL 274: AfAm Lit

One 200- or 300-level EGL elective: _____,

9 EGL Upper Division (300- & 400-level) Requirements

EGL 301: Intensive Writing Course _____ , **Single-Author**

Literary History _____, **Interdisciplinary Study of Literature**

Genre or Media _____,

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EGL 491: Honors British Literature _____, EGL 492: Honors American Literature
_____,
(EGL 301 is a pre- or corequisite for both EGL 491 and EGL 492, whichever is taken first)

EGL 494: Honors Practicum _____, EGL 496: Senior Honors Thesis

Related Courses Interdisciplinary Concentration

6 credits (two courses) in another department at the 200 or 300 level _____,

EGL CREDITS: 45
NON-EGL CREDITS: 6
TOTAL CREDITS FOR ENGLISH MAJOR: 51

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English 496 Honors Thesis Proposal

Department of English

Stony Brook University

Stony Brook, NY 11794-5350

(631) 632-7400

Name: _____ SBU ID: _____

Email: _____

Semester/Year: _____

Title of Project: _____

Advisor: _____

Second Reader: _____

Project: A 30- to 40-page thesis, with a minimum of 20 scholarly sources, in which the student works closely with a faculty member, meeting approximately once a week. A student may decide, along with her or his faculty advisor, to meet for longer sessions every two weeks instead. The project must be approved by the Honors Program Director.

(Please attach to this page a 300-word proposal, along with a bibliography of 20-30 sources, at least 5 of which must be annotated).

Student's Signature

Date

Advisor's Signature

Date

Second Reader's Signature

Date

Honors Program Director's Signature

Date

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Honors Program: Fulfilling the Enhanced 300-level Course Requirement

To Instructors of EGL 300-level Courses:

In order for a 300-level course to be considered enhanced, both the faculty member and the student must agree to the following criteria:

1. The student must write a 10-15pp final paper that incorporates an appropriate number of secondary sources. The faculty member agrees to closely supervise the development and writing of this final essay in place of the final assignment in the course or as the final assignment in the course, if there is none.
2. The student will undertake additional reading for the course, in consultation with the faculty member, as befits an Honors seminar. This additional reading may consist of primary and/or secondary sources as appropriate. The goal is for Honors students to learn the skills of reflecting more deeply on texts, and to engage in critical conversations and debates associated with the texts in the course.
3. The faculty member agrees to meet with the student at least 3-4 times a semester to discuss the additional readings, and to mentor the student as appropriate. These meetings are not intended to be additional class time, but rather as occasions for conversation and discussion between faculty and student.

The department is aware is that these requirements pose an additional burden for instructors of 300-level courses. Instructors who do not think they will be able to offer this extra component because of other prior commitments should feel free to decline.

I, _____, (Instructor) agree with the terms stated above and am
(please print name)

willing to work with _____ (Student) in EGL _____.
(please print name)

Instructor's Signature

Date

Student's Signature

Date

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