

Motlow State Community College

Honors Program Student Handbook



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History

Motlow State Community College's nationally recognized Honors Program dates to 1975, when Motlow State Community College began offering selected Honors courses. The Honors Program was formally established in 1998 on the Moore County campus, with its first graduates in 2000 under the leadership of Dr. Michael Bradley. The Program expanded offerings to include the Smyrna campus in 2003, the Fayetteville campus in 2011 and the McMinnville campus in 2012. In the 2024-2025 academic year, the MSCC Honors Program offered 56 course sections to over 250 students at three campus locations and online. Since its modern inception, nine professors have led the Honors Program: Dr. Michael Bradley (1998-2000), Prof. Rosie Graham (2000-2002), Prof. Wes Spratlin (2002-2006), Dr. Judith Russell (2006-2010), Dr. Scott Cook (2010-2018), Prof. Meagan McManus (2018-2020), Prof. John Hart (2020-2022), Prof. Nathan Sweeton (2023-2024), Prof. Jenna Caviezel (2024-present).

Mission Statement

The Honors Program at Motlow State Community College (MSCC) provides an interdisciplinary education of exceptional quality to highly motivated students, taught by highly credentialed and motivated faculty. A community of emerging scholars who have a passion for learning and a drive to seek academic excellence, the Honors Program fosters innovative and critical thought from broad global and cultural perspectives through small, specially-designed general education Honors courses and stimulating Honors seminars. The Honors Program cultivates self-expression and the free and creative exchange of ideas; in addition, the Honors experience provides co-curricular and extracurricular learning opportunities, Honors Program and academic program advisement, and community responsibility through service projects. The Honors scholar seeks discovery, knowledge, wisdom, and personal growth and fosters the highest

standards of personal and academic integrity and intellectual curiosity. The Honors Program seeks to motivate scholars to develop their fullest potentials, including well-developed composition and research skills, ethical decision making, and information literacy.

Honors Program Outcomes

Students who successfully complete the MSCC Honors Program will:

1. Express respect for human diversity and a critical awareness of their own assumptions, stereotypes, and biases when confronting difference
2. Demonstrate an understanding of interdisciplinary inquiry and a recognition of its centrality in the liberal arts
3. Construct logical arguments of complex ideas in speech, writing, and other media
4. Practice critical thinking skills within the classroom and the community
5. Exhibit an understanding of the ethical and moral obligations of an informed and engaged citizen
6. Employ an awareness of civic responsibility through community engagement.

Eligibility Requirements

Students may be admitted to the Honors Program if they meet the following requirements:

- First-time students with a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher and an ACT composite score of 23 or above
- First-time students with a high school GPA of 3.6 or higher (no ACT score required)
- Students who have taken collegiate courses must have a 3.0 cumulative collegiate GPA.

Note: students who do not meet the requirements listed above may still enroll in an Honors course upon the approval of the Honors Program Director or the individual professor teaching the course.

To remain eligible for Honors Program courses, students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative collegiate GPA. In the event that GPA falls below 3.0, the student will receive one probationary semester in Honors courses to bring that GPA back up to the minimum 3.0. If a GPA remains below 3.0 for a subsequent semester, the student will not be permitted to persist in the Program. Issues of academic misconduct may also result in removal from the Program.

Program Requirements

Eligible students may choose to complete a requisite number of Honors courses to complete the Honors Program and receive Honors Program Scholar distinction at graduation.

- Complete an Associate's Degree in any area
- Maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher
- Complete a minimum of 15 credit hours of Honors coursework, with at least:
 - six hours of Honors credits in English
 - a three-hour Honors Seminar course
 - at least one credit hour of any Motlow Course with a Service Learning designation

**Note: there are several different ways to complete each of these sub-requirements. Honors Program Faculty can provide advisement assistance to help students select the best possible pathway.*

While 15 hours of Honors credit is the minimum to complete the Program, students are encouraged to complete as many general education requirements as possible through Honors. Eligible students are not required to complete the full program in order to enjoy the benefits of Honors coursework throughout their time at Motlow! These students will also receive Honors Program Participant distinction at graduation.

Course Information

Honors courses are specially designed sections of transferable general education, major pathway, and elective courses. All Honors courses are specifically notated on MSCC transcripts.

Honors courses sections are capped at 18 students. These small classes create an environment that is characterized by a passion for learning, more personal interactions among students and faculty, and lively discussions. Courses are typically open only to Honors students, which allows students to become engaged in a highly motivated and supportive learning community. Current and future Honors course offerings can be found on the Honors web page.

Advantages of the Honors Program

Students in Honors courses can:

- Apply for a renewable, \$1000-per-semester Honors scholarship

- Connect with faculty mentors; all Honors classes have smaller 18:1 student to professor ratios
- Earn course credit that counts both toward general education and Honors requirements
- Engage more deeply with fellow students through interactive and experiential learning
- Spend time with peers in between classes in the McMinnville, Moore County, and Smyrna campus honors lounges
- Explore topics you already love, like Harry Potter or Horror Cinema, in themed Honors seminar courses
- Challenge your critical thinking skills without increasing your coursework
- Take learning on the road; class trips allow you and your classmates to build a great community
- Gain a competitive edge when applying for four-year colleges and scholarships
- Transfer honors credits to many 4-year Honors Colleges
- Receive special recognition at graduation.

Honors Program Activities

The MSCC Honors Program participates in multiple symposia and conferences annually.

Each term, the Program hosts a joint Honors and Undergraduate Research Symposium (Moore County each Fall, Smyrna each Spring, and a Zoom option every semester). At the symposium, students are given a chance to present exceptional research in front of their professors, peers, family, and friends.

The MSCC Honors Program also participates in both regional and national conferences. In the spring, students and professors have the opportunity to attend and present at both the Tennessee Collegiate Honors Council conference and the Southern Regional Honors Council conference. Presenters at these regional conferences may then be eligible to attend and present at the National Collegiate Honors Council conference.



Honors students and faculty at the 2025 TCHC conference hosted by MTSU.



Students who attended the 2025 Southern Regional Honors Council Conference in Chattanooga, Tennessee also enjoyed a private tour of the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga Honors College.

In addition to conference travel, students in the Honors Program are invited to take a variety of field trips related to their Honors courses. These trips usually come at little or no cost to the student, except meals. Honors students regularly take trips to museums, artistic performances, ghost walks, historic locations, battlefields, and many more places.

Contact Information

Honors Program Director

Jenna Caviezel, Professor of Languages
jcaviezel@mscc.edu
honors@mscc.edu
931-393-1724

Administrative Assistant to Honors

Donavon King
dking@mscc.edu
honors@mscc.edu
931-393-1844

Honors Lounge Locations

Honors lounges are a place to study between classes, connect with Honors peers, and enjoy free snacks. And don't forget to say hi to Cornelius, our Honors Lounge mascot when you stop by!

McMinnville

MC 135

Moore Co

Crouch 1042

Smyrna

HSC 357

