



**HONORS**  
PROGRAM  
Mt. San Antonio College

**FACULTY HANDBOOK**  
**2015-16**



**Visit Us!**  
**26A-1680**

Phone: 909-274-4665

Fax: 909-468-4101

Email: [Honors@mtsac.edu](mailto:Honors@mtsac.edu)

Website: [Honors.mtsac.edu](http://Honors.mtsac.edu)

## Index/Contacts

	Page #
The Basics	<b>3</b>
Benefits of Teaching in the Mt. SAC Honors Program	<b>4</b>
Honors Course Design and Objectives	<b>5</b>
Teaching an Honors Course: Instructional Design	<b>6</b>
Teaching an Honors Course: Course Delivery	<b>7</b>
Sending a New Honors Course Through Curriculum	<b>8</b>
Outcomes Assessment of Honors Courses	<b>9</b>
Transfer Opportunities for Honors Students	<b>10</b>
Research/Conference Opportunities for Honors Students	<b>11</b>
Publishing Opportunities for Honors Students	<b>12</b>
How to Refer a Student to Honors	<b>12</b>
The Honors Program Advisory Committee	<b>12</b>

### Stay in Touch! For More Information, Contact:

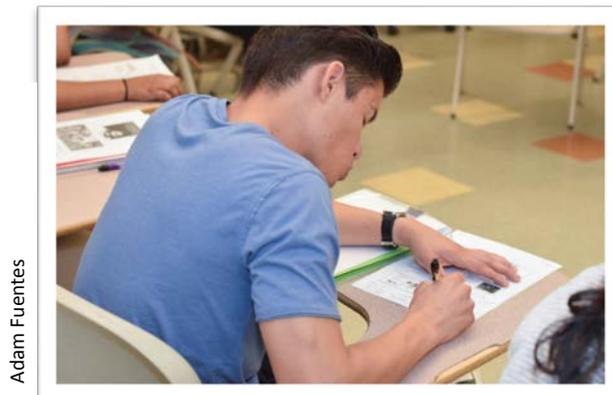
Vacant-To Be Filled by Aug. 2016, Director of Honors      x4528

Carol Impara, Honors Faculty Coordinator      x4842  
[cimpara@mtsac.edu](mailto:cimpara@mtsac.edu)

Linda Diaz, Honors Educational Advisor      x4405  
[ldiaz@mtsac.edu](mailto:ldiaz@mtsac.edu)

Randy Wilson, Honors Counselor      x4906  
[rwilson@mtsac.edu](mailto:rwilson@mtsac.edu)

Sue Ceja, Honors Assistant      x4665  
[sceja@mtsac.edu](mailto:sceja@mtsac.edu)



Adam Fuentes

## Mt. SAC Honors Program: The Basics

### History

The Mt. SAC Honors Program began in 1994 under the guidance of Dr. Stephen Runnebohm and Dr. Mary Brackenhoff. Starting with only three classes and 26 students, the Honors Program has grown to include nearly 1000 students and 40 Honors courses.

### Philosophy

The Honors Program is designed to provide students with an enriched experience. It shares features common to all outstanding Honors programs, such as small classes, talented professors, and a community of highly motivated students. Honors courses give students additional experience in *expressing ideas* (written and/or oral communication), *inquiry and analysis*, and *research skills*.

For many students, Honors offers a “second chance” for students to attend their dream college or university. In other cases, students who never saw themselves as scholars discover they have academic talents and strengths.

### Courses

Honors courses fulfill requirements for Mt. SAC’s associate degrees and transfer requirements for UC, CSU, and many private universities. Students who are “program certified” (complete 15 units of Honors classes) receive priority consideration for transfer at certain universities, may be eligible for special scholarships or perks, and are recognized as Honors Scholars at graduation and on their transcripts.

### Class Size

Honors courses feature smaller class sizes, typically around 20 students. Classes in which both honors and non-honors courses are offered at the same time (called “stacked” or “blended” classes) may have 25 students. Faculty may follow the faculty contract and add up to 20% of the established class size.



Adam Fuentes

# The Benefits of Teaching in the Mt. SAC Honors Program

By Linda Rillorta, Professor of Sociology and Member of the Honors Advisory Board

I really, really enjoy teaching the Honors classes. They are fun, stimulating, and I am able to present material that I cannot in my regular classes. The papers are **interesting to read** because they are well written and well researched. The students spend more time on their assignments and put a lot of effort into them.

The Honors Students seem to want more **personal relationships** with their professors. They will come to visit during office hours and outside of class. Students **keep in touch** with me even after they are no longer in my class. They come by to visit or just to say hello. They also keep in touch after they have graduated or transferred. Former Honors students come by my office or sometimes show up at my classroom. They also email me or write to me on Facebook. I have had two Honors Reunion parties at my house. I have been invited to graduations, graduation parties, weddings, and baby showers. I have written numerous letters of recommendation for students who apply to Masters Programs, Ph.D. Programs, Medical School, Law School, and even a Marine Officer Training Program.

Here are a few other things I really love about teaching Honors:

## Students are the best and the brightest.

- They come prepared for class, are rarely absent, and there is a low attrition rate
- Class discussions are dynamic and interesting
- They turn in their papers on time

## The Honors students form a close-knit environment because they tend to know one another.

- They tend to form study groups on their own
- The small class size also helps increase in-class discussions and relationship-building

## Teaching Honors classes does mean extra work; however, the extra work is very rewarding.

- Students will ask you to write recommendations for college applications, scholarships, and personal statements
- Students want to visit during office hours
- Students ask for help in preparing papers and studying for tests
- Students seek help with their research projects that they want to present at conferences
- Students are concerned about their grades so they want to check up on how they are doing in the class
- Students invite you to participate in the activities (Conferences, Debates, Honors Parties, PTK Inductions, Performances)

## Honors Course Design and Objectives

The National Collegiate Honors Council, a national consortium of Honors directors, faculty, and administrators, publishes guidelines for Honors courses nationwide. (For more information, see <http://nchchonors.org/>.) The following excerpts their section on Honors Course Design.

**Every Honors instructor is different and every Honors course is different. Still, there do seem to be some characteristics that are common to many, if not most, Honors courses. Below are some guidelines that you may find helpful. In the words of one Honors faculty member, the finest instructors are those who are ‘willing to share the responsibility for teaching and learning with their students. The key to a successful Honors program is not the intelligence of the student or the subject matter of the course, but the attitude and approach of the instructor.’**

**Most Honors courses will have the following five objectives, or some variation:**

- 1. To help students develop effective written communication skills (including the ability to make effective use of the information and ideas they learn);**
- 2. To help students develop effective oral communication skills (while recognizing that not all students are comfortable talking a lot in class);**
- 3. To help students develop their ability to analyze and synthesize a broad range of material;**
- 4. To help students understand how scholars think about problems, formulate hypotheses, research those problems, and draw conclusions about them; and to help students understand how creative artists approach the creative process and produce an original work;**
- 5. To help students become more independent and critical thinkers, demonstrating the ability to use knowledge and logic when discussing an issue or an idea, while considering the consequences of their ideas, for themselves, for others, and for society.**

The NCHC’s focus on critical thinking, research, and oral and written communication is reflected in SLOs written for Honors courses.

## Teaching an Honors Course: Instructional Design

At an Honors program faculty workshop, faculty described an array of possible course design options for Honors courses. These run the gamut from minor modifications to the comparable non-Honors course, to a complete reimagining of the syllabus, assignments, and classroom experience.

### Minor Modifications:

- Require more readings, and/or increase difficulty of readings
- Expand writing assignments to increase breadth and depth of research and inquiry
- Require a class presentation on the topic of a major assignment

### Seminar Modifications:

- Reduce faculty lecture and facilitate more discussions
- Require regular verbal participation in discussion
- Create more presentation opportunities for students on topics in course outline
- Assign students the responsibility of leading discussions

### Conference/Outside Activity Enhancements:

- Require students to participate in an academic conference, either on or off campus
- Require students to attend or present at a public event, forum, or contest
- Add a significant field trip experience (must be noted in schedule of courses and approved by the dean)
- Include service learning as a component of curriculum

### Critical Thinking Enhancements:

- Choose a focus area for the semester for in depth research and exploration (i.e. writing course with theme of China)
- Include in-class debates requiring students to research and argue opposite sides of the same issue
- Expand problem-solving and case study activities
- Require students to design lab experiments and/or write exam questions

### Major Modifications:

- Create semester-long teams that complete regular “challenges” in the style of reality television
- Create “companies” that students work collaboratively in

## Teaching an Honors Course: Course Delivery

Honors Faculty brainstormed a list of course delivery considerations to best reach our students.

### Classroom Environment/Climate Issues:

- Smaller numbers of students can sit differently in a classroom. Avoid rows. Create small group pods, a conference-style setup, or semicircle.
- Relocate the teaching position from the front and center of the room to demonstrate a less top-down approach to learning.
- Schedule the course in a nontraditional space (conference room, computer lab, black box theater) to generate a different feeling than a typical course.
- Get outside of the classroom and/or allow students to move around frequently to stimulate engagement.
- Before banning all technology, find creative ways for students to use their smart phones and tablets to enhance learning.
- Bring in students from previous semesters to give students suggestions and motivation for your course.



Adam Fuentes

### Management and Accountability Issues

- Consider “jobs” for students so they can take ownership in the experience (roll taker, extra credit coordinator, proofreader, etc.).
- Engage the students in a discussion about appropriate classroom rules and norms that will create a positive climate for their learning needs, and ask them to help monitor and/or enforce these.
- Provide, as needed, suggestions to help students with time management, stress reduction, and self-management.
- Maintain strong standards for your Honors courses – even if students seem frustrated by it. Our transfer universities make it clear that they expect Honors students to meet a higher standard than other transfer students.

## **Sending a New Honors Course through Curriculum**

At Mt. SAC, Honors courses have a comparative conventional, or non-honors, course and are designated with an “H” at the end.

This makes it easy to design curriculum! You will need to cover the same topics as the non-honors course, plus add some kind of enrichment. You can determine the enrichment by setting a course objective that is pertinent to your discipline and fulfills one or more Honors Course Design principles (see handout from NCHC).

After setting your objective, consider what **enrichment** you will make to your course. This can be accomplished a number of ways, and is up to you, the faculty member, who is the curriculum expert. From this enrichment, you will construct a sample assignment or design your course to provide this enrichment.

If more than one faculty member plans to teach this Honors course, all should be included in this discussion because all will be expected to follow the same course outline of record.

In WebCMS, you can **create a new course proposal** (do NOT modify an existing course – it will overwrite the old course!). Start by copying and pasting the non-honors course into your new course proposal section. Then you can make the following changes/additions.

### **SECTION B – Official Course Information.**

1. **Maximum Class Size** should be 20. Compare to other Honors courses.
2. **Course Special Designator.** Choose SDH1 – Honors Course.

### **SECTION E – Course Content.**

**1a. Catalog Description.** This description will be the same as the non-honors course. At the end of the paragraph, add: An honors course designed to provide an enriched experience. Students may not receive credit for both [course ID] and [course ID]H.

The Class Schedule Description will be the same as the conventional course.

**3. Course Measurable Objectives.** Add one or more objectives that will fulfill an Honors Course Design principle. It is appropriate to use the higher level Bloom’s taxonomy domains here, such as analyzing, synthesizing, or evaluating, if these accurately describe what you are trying to do.

**4. Course Methods of Evaluation.** Add an indication of the enrichment activity you will expect into the appropriate category.

**5. Sample Assignments.** One of your sample assignments should reflect the Honors Course Measurable Objective you wrote.

Remember, you do not need to *add* assignments to an Honors course. You can reformat current assignments or expect a different level of student engagement in the classroom. However, you will have to find a way to measure these differences, and include the description of these in the Course Measurable Objectives and Sample Assignments.

Don't forget to get **Department approval** for the course first, and have that approval reflected in the Department minutes. Minutes should be attached in WebCMS.

If you need any help, please do not hesitate to contact the Honors Faculty Coordinator at extension 4842.

## **Outcomes Assessment of Honors Courses**

The Honors Program has developed three Student Learning Outcomes that reflect the Program's emphasis on critical thinking, research skills, and written and oral communication.

### **SLO #1: *Inquiry/Critical Thinking and Analysis***

Students will demonstrate inquiry (a systematic process of exploring issues, objects or works) and analysis (assessment of evidence resulting in conclusions or judgments) as part of their Honors coursework.

*This SLO can be used for assignments or projects in which students engage in secondary research.*

### **SLO #2: *Written and Oral Communication Competence***

Students will write and or speak effectively as part of their Honors coursework.

### **SLO #3: *Problem Solving Competence***

Students will demonstrate problem solving and evaluation skills as part of their Honors coursework.

*This SLO can be used for assignments or projects in which students engage in primary research.*

Each SLO has a rubric that professors can use to evaluate the completion of the outcome. According to the Outcomes Committee, Honors faculty may evaluate an Honors SLO in place of a course SLO.

## Transfer Opportunities for Honors Students

### UCLA - Transfer Alliance Program (TAP)

TAP certified students receive priority consideration for transfer from UCLA's College of Letters and Sciences (not engineering, communications, film or theatre), and may opt to complete the requirements for a second major. Rates of acceptance are much higher for TAP-certified students. For example, for Fall 2016, 25% of non Honors Mt. SAC applicants to UCLA College of Letters and Sciences were accepted, and 76% of Mt. SAC's TAP students (Honors program certified) were accepted!

### TAP Requirements:

- Attain a minimum of 3.2 cumulative bachelor-level GPA by end of the Fall that you apply (in reality, highly competitive majors require a GPA of 3.7 or higher for acceptance)
- Complete at least two Honors classes by the end of Fall before you transfer
- Complete 15 units of Honors classes with at least a C by Spring/Summer after you apply
- Are NOT majoring in Film, Theatre, Engineering or Communications

### UCI - Honors to Honors

Mt. SAC Honors students who complete 15 units of Honors classes, with a GPA of 3.7 or higher and have finished their major preparation, are eligible for **guaranteed** Honors to Honors admission to UCI and may win Regent scholarships. (76% of other Honors students were admitted to UCI in 2014; the overall admit rate was 52%). Excluded majors include Performing Arts and Business Administration.

### Other Transfer Opportunities through Honors Transfer Council of California (HTCC)

Currently, HTCC maintains transfer agreements with 22 universities. Transfer opportunities include financial aid, housing, priority registration, entrance to the Honors program, and other advantages.

Amherst College	Loyola Marymount U	UC Irvine
Chapman University	Mills College	Univ of La Verne
Colorado State University	Occidental College	U of San Diego Honors
Connecticut College	Pitzer College	San Diego State U
CSU Fullerton Honors	Pomona College	Whitman College
CSUF Business Honors	Trinity College	Whittier College
La Sierra University	U of Arizona	
Gonzaga University	Scripps	

For more information about the options and benefits these institutions provide Honors students, visit the Transfer Council's web site at <http://htcca.org/transfer-partners/>

### UC Berkeley

UC Berkeley does not have a special agreement with the Honors Program, but Cal will consider Honors program completion as a criterion for admission into the university. In 2015, 56% of Mt. SAC Honors applicants were admitted to Berkeley, but only 18% of non Honors student applicants were accepted. The overall admit rate from Mt. SAC was 25%.

## Research, Conference and Publishing Opportunities

CONFERENCE	DEADLINE
<b>Honors Students Only</b>	
<b>Honors Transfer Council of California</b> Annual student research conference for California community college honors students. Publication opportunities. <a href="http://htcca.org/conference/">http://htcca.org/conference/</a> <i>Conference: Saturday in late March/early April</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Location: UC Irvine</i></span>	Abstract Deadline: Early December
<b>Bay Area Consortium Honors Research Symposium</b> Annual student research conference for community college honors students. <a href="http://www.losmedanos.edu/honors/research/">http://www.losmedanos.edu/honors/research/</a> <i>Conference: May</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Location: UC Berkeley or Stanford</i></span>	Abstract Deadline: January
<b>The Western Regional Honors Council</b> Annual three-day event for Honors students to present their work, participate in panel discussions, and attend workshops. <a href="http://www.wrhc.nau.edu/">http://www.wrhc.nau.edu/</a> <i>Conference: April</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Location: varies</i></span>	Proposal Deadline: Late December
<b>All Undergraduates</b>	
<b>Mt. SAC Student Research Showcase</b> Posters featuring research performed by Mt. SAC students. <i>Showcase: April</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Location: 9C Stage</i></span>	March
<b>Southern California Conference of Undergrad Research</b> A forum to present the best research/ creative projects of undergraduate students in the region, and encourage communication of innovative achievements across disciplines. <a href="http://www.sccur.org/">http://www.sccur.org/</a> <i>Conference: TBA, typically November 2016</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Location: varies</i></span>	Abstract Deadline: Early October
<b>Pacific Coast Undergraduate Mathematics Conference</b> Designed specifically for undergraduate students who are majoring or have an interest in mathematics. <a href="http://www.pcumc-math.org/">http://www.pcumc-math.org/</a> <i>Conference: March</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Location: varies</i></span>	Proposal Deadline: February
<b>Pacific Sociological Association</b> Students wishing to present are required to submit an abstract that includes a clear discussion of theory and methods. <a href="http://www.pacificsoc.org/">http://www.pacificsoc.org/</a> <i>Conference: late March</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Location: Oakland, CA</i></span>	Proposal Deadline: October
<b>Western Psychological Association</b> Contact Professor Stacy Bacigalupi for details. <a href="http://westernpsych.org/">http://westernpsych.org/</a> <i>Conference: late April</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Location: Long Beach, CA</i></span>	Proposal Deadline: November 15

## Publishing Opportunities

Abstracts may be published via the above conferences.

Honors students may also publish original, creative work (essays, non-fiction, poetry, short fiction, visual art) in Western Regional Honors Council's Literary Journal, *Scribendi*. [scribendi.unm.edu](http://scribendi.unm.edu)

Phi Theta Kappa members may submit creative written work (poems, essays, short stories, research papers, or works of drama) to *Nota Bene*, an annual publication and competition sponsored by PTK. Nota Bene also awards scholarship awards for top entries.

## How to Refer a Student to the Honors Program

You can easily refer a student to the Honors Program via the Faculty tab in MyPortal. Simply click the "Refer a Student to Honors" in the Faculty Self-Service list. Choose your term and course, and the list of eligible students will appear. If the student is already a member of the Honors Program, the display will tell you. After submitting the student name, the student will automatically receive an email stating that you have referred him or her, and the Honors Program will receive a notification as well. If the student applies to the Honors Program, your referral will serve as a recommendation. No further action is required by you!

## The Honors Program Advisory Committee

The Honors Program is a collaborative effort between faculty from all divisions in the college. Honors faculty can serve on the Honors Program Advisory Committee, a group that meets once per semester to review Honors Program goals and advise further actions to take. The Advisory Committee consists of the Honors Program Director, Honors Faculty Coordinator, Honors Educational Counselor and Advisor, Dean of Humanities, five Honors faculty members, and the directors of EOPS, Career and Transfer Services, and ASPIRE. Please contact the Honors Director if you are interested in serving on this committee.

### Faculty Self Service

- [Select Term](#)
- [Select a CRN](#)
- [Faculty Detail Schedule](#)
- [Week at a Glance](#)
- [Summary Class List](#)
- [Print Your Class Rosters](#)
- [Faculty Drop Roster](#)
- [Final Grades](#)
- [Positive Attendance Form for Non-Credit Classes](#)
- [Office Hours](#)
- [Refer Students to Tutoring or Counseling](#)
- [Lab Attendance Query](#)
- [Lab Attendance by Professor](#)
- [View Student's Registration Appointment](#)
- [Flex Form](#)
- [Notice of Assignment](#)
- [Update Contact Information](#)
- [Activate a Student Evaluation of your Class](#)
- [Refer Students to the Honors Program](#)