



**MICHIGAN NURSING**  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

# **Honors Program Handbook**

Updated July 2025



Dear Honor Students:

Congratulations! You are part of a small group of students invited to join the UMSN Honors Program after a rigorous selection process. You will be working with a faculty mentor who is involved in research and clinical scholarship. This experience, as well as the Honors Seminar courses at the sophomore and junior levels, will prepare you for graduate school and a future role in generating nursing knowledge that will improve health care and outcomes for patients. By the end of your senior year, you will complete a written paper on your research and present a poster at the UMSN Research Day. Honor students have had opportunities to write articles with their faculty and present their research at professional conferences. In addition, you will take a graduate course that will expose you to graduate school and assist with transition into an advanced degree program.

Your participation in the Honors Program has numerous benefits. Graduate programs will consider your Honors Program experience during their admission selection process. Employers will see this on your resume and know that you are committed to excellence, initiative, and hard work. And perhaps most importantly, you will grow academically, personally, and professionally and form close relationships with peers and faculty that will last a lifetime. You will be well-positioned to become a nursing leader.

Our best to you as you begin this exciting experience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dana Tschannen'.

Dana Tschannen, PhD, RN  
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies  
Program School of Nursing

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Erin Kahle'.

Erin M. Kahle, PhD, MPH  
Lead Faculty, Honors  
School of Nursing

# ***University of Michigan School of Nursing Honors Program***

## **Honors Program Description**

### **A. Program Goal**

Graduates of the Honors Program are prepared for active engagement in research and other scholarly work with the necessary knowledge, skills, and values predictive of successful graduate study. They will also have enhanced personal growth in preparation for successful careers that demonstrate leadership and excellence in professional nursing.

### **B. Specific Aims**

Upon completion of the Honors Program, students will have:

1. Identified a substantive area of nursing or health science that has the potential to be the focus of graduate study.
2. Produced an honors project demonstrating the science of nursing or health sciences.
3. Actively disseminated the product of their scholarly work.
4. Completed non-nursing educational experiences that complements and enhances their scholarship activities.
5. Participated in experiences that foster leadership skill development.

### **C. Selection of Candidates**

Application to the Honors Program is open to UMSN students that meet the eligibility requirements:

- Sophomore level undergraduate student in good standing
- Minimum GPA of 3.5 or higher
- Completed application materials submitted to the Undergraduate Office by due date. Applications are then reviewed by UMSN faculty and the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies. At that point, select applicants will be invited for an interview.

Following these interviews, finalists are selected for the Honors Program. Students begin the Honors Program in the Fall semester of the Sophomore year.

## **Structure of the Program**

### **A. Program Overview**

The Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies oversees the Honors Program. Upon entering the Honors Program, students are expected to actively engage in all activities designed for the program including but not limited to attending and participating in a community of scholars forum held once a month. The lead faculty of the honors program is responsible for coordinating the events, mentoring students, and serving as liaison between students, faculty mentors, the School of Nursing, and the University.

## **B. Honors Coursework**

Honors students take special Honors courses in addition to the standard curriculum. The following are required courses in the Honors Program:

- N295 – Sophomore level honors seminar WINTER (1 credit)
- N390 – Junior level honors seminar FALL (1 credit)
- N395 – Junior level honors seminar WINTER (1 credit)
- N490 – Senior level honors seminar FALL (1 credit)
- N495 – Honors Project (Minimum of 2 credits)
- Graduate course: students will work with the Honors Faculty Lead and Honors mentor to identify an appropriate graduate-level course in junior or senior year. This course should be relevant to Honors project, Nursing science or planned career objectives.

These courses must be taken for a letter grade (“A”-“E”).

## **C. Additional Enrichment Experiences**

During the Honors Program, enrichment experiences might include opportunities to shadow specialized practitioners, attend professional meetings and speaker presentations, and conduct a community project.

## **D. Mentored Research or Clinical Scholarship Experience**

A major component of the Honors Program is a mentored experience with a scientist (PhD-prepared) or a clinical scholar (DNP-prepared) faculty within the School of Nursing and other schools or colleges at The University of Michigan.

- Sophomore year, students will be matched with a faculty mentor.
- Students will work with their faculty mentor throughout their program. Students participate on the research or multidisciplinary teams. Their activities may include conducting scientific literature reviews (integrated review, systematic review, evidence- based practice review), clinical or non-clinical research (data collection, data management and analysis) performance or quality improvement projects, and dissemination of research or related scholarly work (e.g., manuscript or grant preparation and submission).
- Students generate their own scholarly project, usually based on the research/scholarship of their faculty mentor. The faculty mentor guides the process as they conduct their scholarly project.
- The end product of the project is an honor’s paper and a poster presentation at the annual UMSN Research Day. Honors students are encouraged to present their work at local, regional, and/or national conferences.
- Students register for a minimum of 2 credits during their junior and/or senior year under the independent study section number of their faculty mentor.
- Faculty mentors grade the honors project for a letter grade (“A”- “E”).
- The honors paper should be submitted to the faculty mentor, program lead faculty, and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> of senior year.
- Lack of attendance (less than 70% in one academic calendar), and failure to take the required honors courses, complete the honors scholarly work and leadership experience, or complete the honors paper and poster presentation will result in withdrawal of the Honors Program scholarship funding for a timeframe determined by the Associate Dean

for Undergraduate Studies.

- The Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies will determine a student's status in the Honors Program if problems should occur such as failure to fulfill expectations or professional behavior.
- Sanctions could include dismissal from the Honors Program.

### **E. Maintaining Honors Designation**

- A minimum GPA of 3.0 each term must be maintained. If the term and/or cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, the student will be asked to leave the Honors Program. In addition, the failure of any course will result in a dismissal from the Honors Program.
- The Honors Program scholarship will be withdrawn if a student is dismissed from the Honors Program.
- Students can also be dismissed from the Honors Program by the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies for infractions related to the academic and professional code of conduct.

### **F. Voluntary Withdrawal from the Honors Program**

If the student decides to withdraw from the honors program, voluntarily, the student must:

- Write a letter to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies indicating the intent and reason for withdrawal.
- Meet with the honors program lead faculty for an exit interview.

### **G. Summary of Student Responsibilities**

Students receive a scholarship each term for their participation in the Honors Program. Receiving the scholarship is dependent on satisfactory completion of all program requirements.

1. Attend all scheduled Honors Program meetings/forums and events.
2. Participate in a designated community service event each year.
3. Complete satisfactory work with a faculty mentor.
4. Complete an Honors Paper at a "B" level or higher.
5. Complete a poster and present it at the UMSN Research Day.
6. Complete all required Honors Program coursework.
7. Attendance at the UMSN Research Day
8. Meet with honors program lead faculty for annual evaluation at the end of each academic year.

### **H. Outstanding Honors Project Award**

1. Students are eligible to participate in the undergraduate poster competition held during the U M S N Research Day.
2. Each year, a group of faculty select a senior honor's paper for the Outstanding Honors Project Award. The student and their faculty research mentor are honored with a certificate and a small monetary award.

### **I. Distance Education**

Students who will not be located in the state of Michigan when completing coursework can find state-specific complaint resolution policies and procedures on the [University of Michigan Distance Education Disclosures](#) page.

## **Guidelines for Undergraduate Nursing Program Honors Project (N495)**

### **I. N495: Undergraduate Nursing Honors Project (2 credits)**

*Junior or senior standing. Required of all Honors Program students.*

The Undergraduate Nursing Honors Project is an opportunity for Honor students to engage in a major independent scholarly project. Under the guidance and approval of a faculty research mentor, the student develops a formal proposal with objectives, plan of action, final product, and methods of evaluation.

### **II. Procedure**

- A. The student will develop a plan or idea for the Honors Project, draft a concise statement of interest, and approach a faculty with expertise in that area of study to negotiate the research or scholarship experience,
- B. The student, with faculty mentor's guidance and approval, will develop a brief proposal for the project (approx. 1-2 pages) to include:
  1. General description of the area to be studied
  2. Objectives
  3. Plan of action for meeting the objectives
  4. Final product
  5. Methods of mentor evaluation of the project
- C. Students will register for a minimum of 2 credits of N495. Most students register for N495 during their senior year, although they may negotiate with their faculty mentor to register for one of those credits junior year.
- D. In keeping with general academic guidelines, one credit hour equals a minimum of three (3) hours of study per week.
- E. The final required product will be a written scholarly paper and a poster presentation, submitted by **April 1, senior year**.
- F. The Undergraduate Nursing Honors Project will be evaluated by the faculty mentor and assigned a **letter grade ("A"- "E")**. Plus/minus designations for the grade can be used at the faculty mentor's discretion.
- G. Federal regulations and University of Michigan policy require that all investigations using human beings or animals as subjects of research must be reviewed and approved by an appropriate University IRB committee. In addition, the Honors student investigators need to undergo certification by completing the training offered through the Program for Education and Evaluation in Responsible Research and Scholarship (PEERRS). This is web-based and information can be found on the University of Michigan's [PEERRS](#) website. Your faculty mentor can guide you through meeting both the PEERRS and IRB requirements as necessary.
- H. The final written paper should have a title page with: project title, student name, faculty mentor name, and date of completion. All projects should also have a one-page abstract, up to 350 words in length, at the beginning of the paper. Standard APA format must be followed.

- I. Students are encouraged to set up regular meetings with their mentors as well as a timeline for completing their projects. Time also needs to be built in for the faculty mentor to review various components of the project, such as a proposal, the IRB application, and drafts of the final write-up. Negotiations with the faculty mentor, regarding specific activities and participation expectations, help to facilitate the research or scholarly work experience.

### **Research Mentor Guidelines for Honor Student Project: N495**

- A. **Sophomore year**, students will review the names and project descriptions of faculty research and scholarship activities in the School of Nursing or the University of Michigan, and will select several projects that interest them.
- B. The student will meet with the lead faculty for the honors program to discuss and identify potential faculty mentor.
- C. After discussion with the lead faculty, the student will meet with the potential mentor(s) and determine the best match.
- D. The student will meet with the faculty mentor with whom they will work to discuss expectations for the student and how the student will be involved in the faculty's research or scholarly work. The student should develop a brief proposal for the project (approximately 1-2 pages) to include:
  1. General description of the area to be studied
  2. Objectives for the project
  3. Plan of action for meeting the objectives, including how they will be involved in the research.
  4. Final product
  5. Methods of evaluation of the honors project
- E. Once the topic for the Honors Project has been agreed upon by the student and faculty mentor, the student will submit the ["Honors Program Directed Research/Scholarly Work Approval Form"](#) to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies. This should be submitted by **February 1 of the junior year.**
- F. Student will register for a minimum of 2 credits of N495 during junior or senior year under the independent study number of the Research Mentor using the "Honors Program Directed Research/Scholarly Work Approval Form".
- G. The student will work on the project with the faculty mentor. Types of possible activities students might do on the project include: collecting data, being involved in an intervention, doing literature reviews, helping with data collection preparation, screening subjects, attending research team meetings, or other activities as agreed upon by the faculty mentor and student. The student must be certified through the University's "Program for Education and Evaluation in Responsible Research and Scholarship" (PEERRS).
- H. The product of the research/scholarship experience is the Honors Project Scholarly Paper and Poster. The "Guidelines for Undergraduate Nursing Honors Project" describes expectations for the project. Honors Projects must be submitted to the Research Mentor and Faculty Lead for the Undergraduate Honors Program by **April 1 of the senior year.**

I. The Honors Project is graded by the faculty mentor and is assigned a **letter grade (“A”-“E”)**.

- J. Students need to complete a poster based on the project for the UMSN Research Day. The faculty mentor will help the student complete the poster.
- K. Any problems during the research experience and Honors Project completion should be referred to the faculty lead of the honors program and/or the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies.