

# HONORS STUDENT COUNCIL HANDBOOK



Honors Student Council

MERRIMACK COLLEGE  
HONORS PROGRAM  
2016-2017

# Merrimack Honors Program Honors Student Council (HSC)

## A GUIDE TO MEMBERSHIP ON THE HONORS STUDENT COUNCIL

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### PURPOSE

The Honors Student Council (HSC) of the Merrimack College Honors Program serves as the primary organization to plan and organize extra-curricular events such as social and community events, on-campus gatherings, and special off-campus events of both academic and non-academic interests. Its purpose is to serve as a representative student body for the entirety of the Honors Program. The Council is a specific group of Honors Students selected to enhance and enrich the academic and social experience of the greater population of Honors Program students. In all matters of its own conduct, the Honors Student Council will fully be self-governing, with the power to create their own rules, offices, and procedures as they judge best.

### STRUCTURE & POSITIONS

The Council will consist of at least nine members with respective council positions. All members must be in good standing with the Honors Program, including maintaining a 3.4GPA for first-year students and 3.5GPA thereafter. The Council consists of a Chair, two Co-Chairs, Secretary, Committee Officers, Assistant Officers, and Committee members.

#### Executive Team

The Executive Team consisting of the Chair and Co-Chairs will be responsible for serving as the liaison between the HSC and the Honors Program Staff. They will be expected to attend executive meetings with members of the Honors Program staff as needed. Additionally, they will report to the Program Manager with information stemming from the committees.

#### Chair

The Chair, to be elected by the members of the HSC, is expected to manage the operations of the Council. He/she manages and oversees the two co-chairs, the secretary, council officers, their respective committees, and tracks the financial budget. He/she works very closely with the Honors Program Staff to ensure student engagement, event success, and Program retention.

#### Co-Chairs (2)

The two Co-Chairs, elected by the members of the HSC, are expected to assist in managing the operations of the Council. They manage and oversee their respective committee areas and council officers, and assist to track the financial budget. They work very closely with the Chair and Honors Program Staff to ensure student engagement and event success. Each co-chair will be designated a certain committee group, either the Student Engagement Group or the Community Engagement Group, and they will specifically manage and oversee the committees of that group (see below).

**Note:** Co-chairs must be different class years.

## Leadership Team

The HSC is structured into committees, creating the Leadership Team, which focuses on specific areas of programming or advocacy. Positions on the leadership team include Officers, Assistant Officers, and Committee Members. All members are responsible for coordinating, executing, and attending to all agreed aspects of their respective committee. This includes reserving rooms and spaces, and ordering & receiving needed supplies. Each committee officer reports to the Executive Team for guidance and approval. The committees are subject to change at the discretion of the Executive Team upon the beginning of their terms.

### Officers and Assistant Officers

Officers and Assistant Officers are responsible for overseeing the operations of their specific committee, and for working with their team of individuals. Officers and Assistant Officers work to plan and execute specific events pertaining to their committee's description. All committees have an officer that leads the group, and most committees have an assistant officer who will serve as an additional leader for the committee.

### Committee Members

Committee members are responsible for performing the duties assigned by the respective committee officer. Members remain in close communication with their committees. They also bring to light any requests, concerns, or comments from the general population of the Honors Program and help the HSC plan, execute, and attend HSC events.

### Secretary

The secretary is responsible for working directly with the Executive Team and aiding any needs on their part. More specifically, at each Council meeting, the Secretary will serve to take attendance and record & share the minutes.

### Graduate Fellow and Program Manager

The Graduate Fellow and Program Manager are to serve as a higher level resource of knowledge and assistance. The Graduate Fellow and Program Manager work with the Executive Team. This may include helping and/or leading meetings when appropriate, but does not require the Graduate Fellow or Program Manager to do so. If at any point the HSC feels uncomfortable or unsatisfied with the Graduate Fellow's level of involvement, they may bring it to the attention of an appropriate channel.

**Note:** Regardless of position, all HSC members are expected to **actively** attend and participate in Honors Student Council events. Committee officers may establish specific roles for their members, but all members should be in attendance and should have distinguished roles if the event falls under their respective committee. The support for other committee events is expected, as well.

## Committees

### Community Engagement

#### Academic/Program Development

- Responsible for attending and recording notes at Honors Program Committee (HPC) meetings
- Coordinates and publicizes academic events held by the HSC and other Merrimack organizations
- Works with Honors Program faculty to coordinate events in which students and faculty interact
- Facilitates various academic and student input surveys to gather feedback and promote change

#### Enrichment

- Establishes an inclusive Honors community by organizing events such as films, shows, plays, etc. that focus on diversity and multicultural awareness
- Works with Merrimack organizations such as Jewish Christian Muslim Relations to facilitate an integrated community dedicated to inclusivity
- Builds an inclusive community with the Honors Commons and Residential Communities by incorporating Merrimack's ideals and traditions with other organizations on and off campus

#### Service/Civic Engagement

- Focuses on planning and executing service-related activities, such as the Wounded Warrior Project, Thanksgiving Basket Drive, Random Acts of Kindness Week, and Relay for Life
- Connects with various organizations, including Campus Ministry and the Office of Student Engagement to participate in service opportunities as an Honors Program community such as Mack Gives Back
- Facilitates fundraising activities and events to collect donations for outside organizations and charities

### Student Engagement

#### Events/Programming

- Responsible for all logistical aspects and coordination/facilitation of social programming and events
- Ensures the facilitation of Honors events such as snack attacks, socials, movie nights, etc.
- Works with the Honors Resident Advisors and Honors Peer Mentors to plan events in the Honors Residential Communities, focusing on activities for the entire Honors Program community
- Works to interconnect all students of all classes in the Honors Program through community-building events

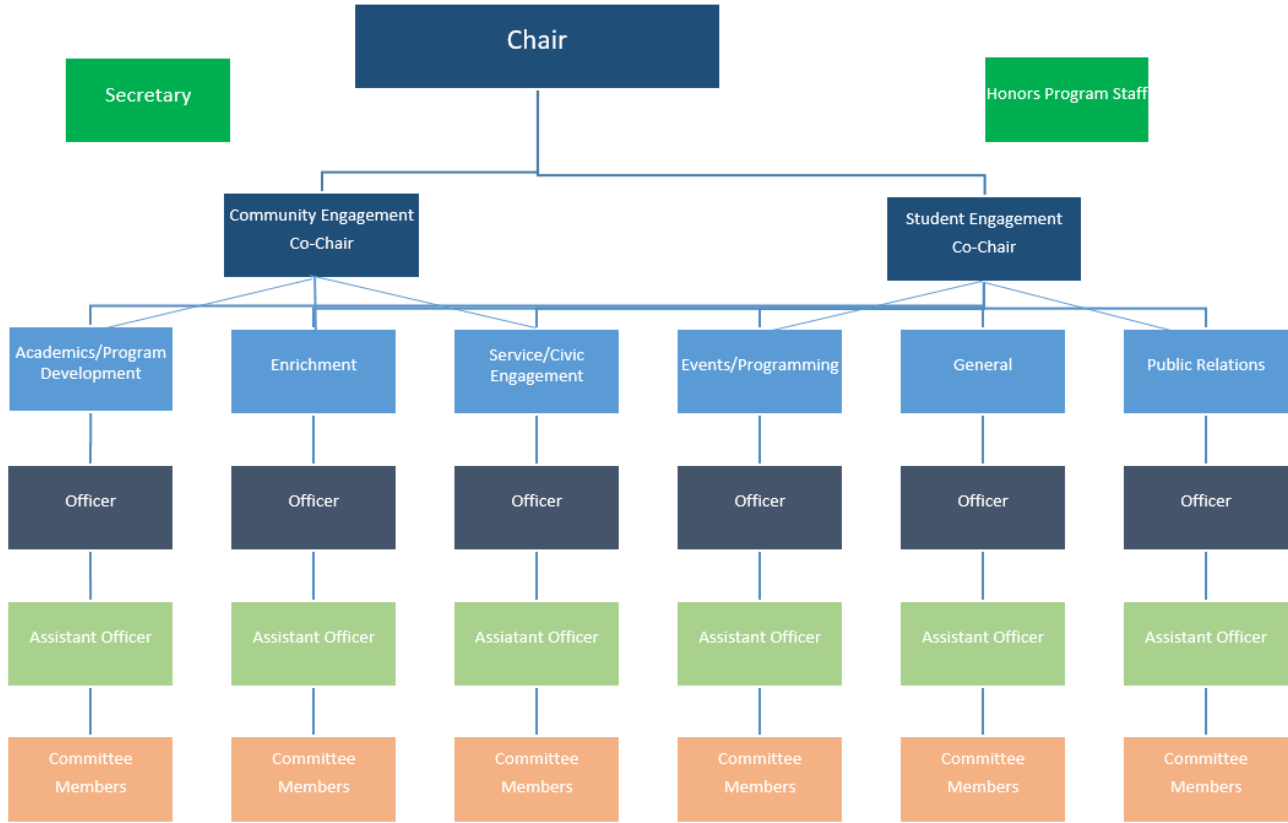
#### General

- Plans and executes Honors Program events in conjunction with other committees
- Coordinates with the Executive Team to help facilitate new member recruitment
- Tracks the Honors Engagement Expectation system and assists with the Terrific Tuesday Update weekly email

#### Public Relations

- Focuses on publicizing the Honors Program through the use of the Honors Program social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat and Instagram accounts
- Advertises events and important information, including helping write for Honors Program newsletter and website, and coordinates with Social Media Coordinator and Staff Assistants
- Assists with the Terrific Tuesday Update weekly email

## Council Structure



## ELECTIONS & MEMBERSHIP

### Election Processes

Towards the end of the spring semester each academic year, the Honors Student Council will facilitate the election process, to establish the Executive and Leadership Teams for the following year. These positions include Chair, Co-Chairs, Officers, and Assistant Officers. To keep this process as fair as possible and without difficulty, the two graduating seniors with the highest position rank will coordinate the election processes. The two will coordinate candidates, verify eligibility, and create and facilitate the voting system and ballots. The two election coordinators may choose a process that best fits the Council’s needs and their preference.

**Please see “Election Processes Addendum – 2016-2017” for further election process details.**

## Position Conditions

### Chair

- Members who have previously served as Chair, Co-Chair, or Officer may apply for this position

### Co-Chairs

- Members who have previously served as Chair, Co-Chair, or Officer may apply for this position
- On the voting ballot, there will be two co-chair positions listed. One co-chair position will be for the class year that will be graduating in the next year, and the other co-chair position will be for the class year graduating in two years.
- Chair, with consultation of Co-Chair candidates decides which candidate oversees which group of committees

### Officers:

- An individual who was not chosen for Chair or a Co-Chair may apply for this position
- All HSC members may apply for this position

### Assistant Officers:

- An individual who was not chosen for Chair, Co-Chair, or Committee Officer may apply for this position
- All existing HSC members may apply for this position

**Note:** Council members planning to participate in a full semester commitment during the fall semester are not eligible to apply for the above positions. See “study abroad/co-op section”.

## Membership

### Committee Members

- Any member of the Honors Program is eligible to apply for this position
- General Committee Officer will facilitate the HSC recruitment process. Members wishing to serve on a specific committee will complete a basic application that indicates their top two choice committees and rationale for their first choice
- Members will be appointed to specific committees by the Chair, Co-Chairs, and respective committee officer

### Secretary

- Any member of the Honors Program is eligible to apply for this position
- Executive team is able to select a student, or may solicit applications should they choose to

## POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### Meetings

The Chair, Co-Chairs, and when available, the Graduate Fellow/Program Manager, will meet weekly prior to the HSC meetings to discuss the current agenda of the HSC, and set the outline for the next HSC meeting. HSC meetings will occur weekly and will include the Chair, Co-Chairs, Secretary, Committee Officers and Assistant Officers. Committee members are encouraged, but not required to attend the weekly meetings. At these meetings, the activities of each committee will be brought to the attention of Council members. Additionally, there will be a scheduled monthly meeting that falls in the same time slot as the weekly meetings, in which all members of the HSC are required to attend. This meeting will occur on the first HSC meeting of that respective month and will bring to light any requests, concerns or comments from the general population of the Honors Program and will primarily focus on strategic planning for the Council.

Additionally, each committee will have bi-weekly meetings with their respective members, to work on assigned events, tasks, and projects. Committees can plan to meet more frequently if they have multiple tasks to complete.

### Attendance

Chair, Co-Chairs, Secretary, Committee Officers, and Assistant Committee Officers will be expected to **actively** attend each weekly meeting as scheduled. In the event that a member cannot attend a meeting, a message must be relayed to the Executive Team and the respective committee officer. If an extenuating circumstance arises, accommodations can be made as long as the member notifies the Executive Team in a timely manner.

Committee members are expected to actively attend monthly meetings and committee meetings. However, these members are welcome and encouraged to attend the weekly meetings if their schedule allows. In addition to attending meetings, all HSC members are expected to attend Honors Program events to show their support for other committees, and other organizations.

In the event that a member does not follow the guidelines of attendance, the member will be subject to a meeting with the Executive Team, which could lead up to, and/or include dismissal from their position.

### Duties

If a member is not following proper guidelines, and is not appropriately fulfilling the duties assigned to them, the Executive Team will meet and will agree on a decision for the member's future on the Council. If this is the first incident, the Executive Team may decide to place the member on probation, a period lasting 3 weeks, with a reevaluation on the 4th week. A reevaluation may consist of reinstatement of, or dismissal from position. If this is a recurring incident, the member may be terminated of their position with given notice via a meeting with the Executive Team. Council member will be notified of a scheduled meeting via email.

### Committee Assignments

In the event that a member has served on a committee for a period of time, and would like to request a change of committee, the member should voice their concern or request to the Executive Team. Additionally, at the end of each academic year, committee assignments will be reviewed by the Executive Team following the election period, to open any changes or switches to the rest of the Council.



## Study Abroad/Co-op

Should a Council member in a leadership position decide to study abroad or complete a co-op not permitting them to fulfill their leadership commitments, they should follow proper guidelines noted below, corresponding to their position. All members should keep in mind their future involvements, and should not take on other involvements that may create a change or obstacle for the Council. All members not actively participating in an HSC leadership role should still be included on meeting minutes and HSC communication via email.

### Chair

- If the member is participating in study abroad or a co-op during the election period (Spring), member candidate will run a campaign while off campus.
- If the member is participating in study abroad or a co-op during the fall, the member is not eligible to run for this leadership position.

### Co-Chairs

- If either Co-Chair decides to participate in study abroad or a co-op, the present member will assume the position of the absent member.
- If the member is participating in study abroad or a co-op during the election period (Spring), member candidate will run a campaign while off campus.
- If the member is participating in study abroad or a co-op during the fall, the member is not eligible to run for this leadership position.
- Should both co-chairs complete a study abroad or co-op, HSC will meet and discuss a plan of action.

### Officers/Assistant Officers

- If either the Committee Officer or Assistant Committee Officer decide to participate in study abroad or a co-op, the present member will assume the position of the absent member.
- If the member is participating in study abroad or a co-op during the election period (Spring), member candidate will run a campaign while off campus.
- If the member is participating in study abroad or a co-op during the fall, the member is not eligible to run for this leadership position.

## Resignation

Should a member of any position choose to resign from their position, they are required to submit a letter to the Executive Team stating so. The letter should state the position they are resigning from, and also the last date of active membership. A two week notice is requested by the Executive Team.

## Change of Policies

Honors Student Council policies and procedures are subject to change. The Executive Team reserves the right to change any policies, procedures, committee duties and expectations, etc. Members will be notified upon adjustment of the HSC handbook. Entire Executive Team must agree with changes of policies. HSC Leadership Team is invited to bring to light any questions or concerns regarding HSC policies and procedures.

## ENGAGEMENT EXPECTATION

**HSC members are expected to abide by the Engagement Expectation policy, regardless of the level of their involvement in the Program.**

Being a student in Merrimack Honors indicates academic excellence, but it also reflects a students' involvement and engagement in the Program throughout their undergraduate careers. Merrimack Honors has implemented an expectation of student engagement to encourage participation in events and activities beyond academic Honors coursework, to personally, intellectually, and academically develop its students in the Honors community.

Since students gain access to benefits including Honors housing, social programming, and student leader opportunities, Honors students are expected to attend mandatory Honors Program events in addition to attending at least **three** expected attendance events **per semester** (noted below). These expected attendance events include academic, intellectual, community-focused or service-related events to fulfill the Program's standards of community involvement and engagement.

Below outlines the list of events Honors students are required to and expected to attend:

### Required Events

#### First-Years

- August Orientation
- Peer Mentor Meet and Greet Night
- Honors Opening Reception
- Mack Gives Back (with Honors FYE)

#### Seniors

- Senior Honors Banquet
- Honors Convocation

### Expected Attendance Events *(attend at least 3 each semester)*

#### Events by semester

##### ▪ **Fall:**

Mix 'n Mingle, HSC service day, Honors Opening Reception<sup>FY</sup>, Google/Blackboard Workshop, Mack Gives Back<sup>FY</sup>, Last Lecture

##### ▪ **Spring:**

LinkedIn Workshop, Pancakes with the Provost's Office, First Lecture, Are You Smarter than a 5th Grader, Relay for Life (Honors team), Ice Cream Social

*NOTE: Events indicated with a 'FY' superscript are already required for first-year students. Therefore, these fulfill an expected attendance event for sophomore students and above.*

While the Program keeps a record of student attendance at events by swiping student identification cards, students should also keep track of their own attendance.

As more events will be coordinated and added to the calendar, it is important to note this list above is **not** exhaustive. All events are subject to change and may be modified, and students are expected to organize their schedules and prioritize events. For clarity, all event dates, times, and locations will be clearer as the semester continues, and all event details will be communicated through the Terrific Tuesday Update (TTU) email and will be listed on flyers through social media.

**NOTE:** In past years, Snack Attacks and other various social programming activities have been "1 point" per event. Due to the change in programming, from the previous years' point system to the current engagement expectation, Snack Attacks will no longer be "1 point" (or an expected attendance event). Therefore, please plan your schedule accordingly. Snack Attacks will still be offered as an opportunity for students to meet and socialize with Honors Program community as well as to enjoy light refreshments.

Considering the idea that Honors student leaders should already be in attendance to many of these events mentioned above, Honors student leaders should attend the same amount of expected attendance events (three), in addition to their respective required events.

The Merrimack College Honors Program strives to collaborate with and sustain its growing community. The Program recognizes that conflicts may and do arise, which may prohibit a student from attending a required event. These conflicts should be communicated to the Program Manager as far in advance as possible to determine a reasonable solution or accommodation. Additionally, due to the numerous expected attendance events offered, less leniency is given when students do not attend the minimum of three events per semester.

All questions regarding the engagement expectation can best be answered by the Executive Team of the Honors Student Council or the Honors Program Manager.

## SOCIAL MEDIA EXPECTATION

It is a Program and College expectation that all student leaders, including all members of the Merrimack College Honors Student Council represent themselves and the Program in a positive and professional manner. Students should accurately, respectfully, and positively speak, write, or share their thoughts, comments, and suggestions in a way that provides clarity and lucid thoughts. Principles of integrity, professionalism, privacy and impartiality should be observed when posting online for, about, and regarding the Program and Merrimack College.

The authenticity of what students post is important. In the event that a member has a question or concern, they should bring it to the attention of the Executive Team or Honors Program staff about the questionable content or concern, before posting about or handling it.

It is always important to note that as a student leader, you have a strong voice in promoting change, and seeking opportunity. Any questions, concerns, issues, or confusing pieces of the Program and of Merrimack College should be channeled through the Executive Team of the Honors Student Council, or the Honors Program staff.

Members of the HSC, and student leaders alike should promote the Merrimack College Honors Program in the best way that they can, by using the following social media outlets, hashtags, and pages.



Merrimack College Honors Program  
*Like us on Facebook!*



@MCHonors  
*Follow us on Twitter!*



Group: Merrimack College Honors Program  
*Create a LinkedIn account and connect!*



@MCHonors  
*Add us on Snapchat!*



@MCHonors  
*Follow us on Instagram!*



Merrimack College  
<http://www.merrimack.edu/academics/Honors/>

**#MCHonors**

## THE HONORS SEAL

The Honors Student Council '12-'13, created this emblem to represent the ideals on which the Program was founded. The Honors Seal is used across the Program for branding and communications. It is embossed on the medal awarded to every Honors Program graduate. We pledge to encourage our members to embody these traits in their actions while a student of the Merrimack College Honors Program.

**The pillars** shown in our seal represent the strength and support we hope the Program give to all Honors Students. Two are shown because we believe that we are stronger together than on our own as individuals.



**The scroll** represents our passion for academics and our mission for academic achievement. We seek truth and intelligence not only during our time at Merrimack College, but as lifelong learners.

**The Latin words written on our seal read** “From knowledge, to wisdom” because we do not simply seek information, but how to use it in our lives and to better our world.

**The crosses** in the outer circle are a tribute to our religious foundation. We aim to uphold the values of the Augustinian tradition and use St. Augustine’s words to guide us “I found all kinds of joy when I was in the company of my friends- talking, laughing and being kind to each other— reading, engaging books together— going from the lightest joking to the talking of the deepest things and back again.” (Confessions 4:8, 13)

Finally, **the ivy** represents the importance of friendship and community. Though we pride ourselves on our academic standards we are equally proud of the friendships that form and grow through learning together.

ACCEPTANCE OF POSITION

Co-Chairs, Secretary, Officers, Assistant Officers,  
Committee members

I \_\_\_\_\_ (name), agree to assume the position of \_\_\_\_\_ (position and committee), in which I will follow the terms set forth by the Honors Student Council Handbook, including term length and duties assigned. I understand that failure to follow the terms will result in my early termination from my position. I further understand that the Honors Student Council Handbook policies are subject to change, and I will be notified of such changes.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ACCEPTANCE OF POSITION

Chair

I \_\_\_\_\_ (name), agree to assume the position of \_\_\_\_\_ (position), in which I will follow the terms set forth by the Honors Student Council Handbook, including term length and duties assigned. I understand that failure to follow the terms will result in my early termination from my position. I further understand that the Honors Student Council Handbook policies are subject to change, and I will be notified of such changes.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Director of Honors Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_