The Interdisciplinary Honors Program at Chestnut Hill College challenges students to pursue a creative approach to the liberal arts. The Program offers a variety of team-taught interdisciplinary seminars that promote liberal education by stressing the interconnections among different fields of study and by encouraging students and faculty alike to teach and to learn.

THE HONORS LEARNING EXPERIENCE

This reading- and writing-intensive Honors Program is an Interdisciplinary learning experience in a group context. Students are encouraged to learn not only from the faculty but also from each other and from their independent studies. The Program allows faculty the opportunity for creative course structuring and collaboration with colleagues from other departments.

To achieve the desired integration of different disciplines into a unified whole, the Program focuses on the interdisciplinary character of the learning experience rather than on individual academic fields. Since faculty from at least two academic departments cooperate in teaching each seminar, the Program offers a learning experience which crosses department lines and which exemplifies the unifying and integrating experience that is the purpose of a liberal education.

Although the content of Honors seminars is considerably more demanding than the content of most introductory courses, these seminars are designed for the inexperienced student and so cannot achieve the depth of upper-level courses for majors. Ideally, the Honors seminar leads the student gradually to a mastery of methodology and a consideration of advanced topics, aiming always at the integration of the student’s learning experiences. Faculty members provide background information and instruction in methodology as needed.
INTERDISCIPLINARY HONORS PROGRAM COURSES
2012-2013

IDHP 210-220:
WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES
This course focuses on writing in various disciplines. It serves as an introduction to the structure, methodology, and skills of the Interdisciplinary Honors Program.

IDHP 301-302:
FAME AND FORTUNE ON THE COUCH
The lives of notable men and women will be probed for insights into their developmental formations, their motives (both conscious and unconscious) for seeking success, and their interactions with other persons (family, friends, and colleagues), along with the times and places where they lived and worked. This interdisciplinary seminar combines the complimentary insights of biography and psychology.

IDHP 340-341:
ONE WORLD: REWEAVING WHOLENESS
This course is guided by a vision of original and ultimate oneness/wholeness, challenged by our personal and communal experience of its historical demise, and committed to our human task of helping to reweave it. The primary texts will invite us into the world of literature and our own lives, allowing each to inform, critique, and interpret the other. Course content and methodology will engage students in the history of ideas, which will unfold through the literature of the Romantic, Baroque, Modern, and Post-Modern periods, where we will discover more about the beliefs and perceptions that shaped human understanding of the (natural/supernatural) world and our relationship to it. The trajectory of studies will lead to our contemporary situation and its evolutionary worldview. From such a vantage point, we will conclude the course in poetic appreciation of mystery and uncertainty, affect and intellect, the spiritual and the material—all vital threads in weaving the tapestry of human and planetary wholeness.

IDHP 330-331:
VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY: SCIENCE and LITERATURE in the 19th and EARLY 20th CENTURIES
This two-semester course will be structured to include three periods in literature and science: the early 19th century ‘era of Romanticism’; the mid 19th century ‘age of Darwinism’; and the early 20th century ‘modernist period’. We will examine how, despite current conceptions of science and literature as two discrete fields of endeavor, during this time, scientists and poets (and novelists) actually took inspiration from each other, and in the process revealed new ways of to understand and to describe the world opening up before them. Topics will include scientific explorations, astronomy, spectroscopy, natural selection and evolution, relativity and quantum mechanics as they influenced and were represented in the literature of the time.

IDHP 334-335:
SCRATCHING OUR NICHE: EXPLORING OUR PLACE IN THE BIOSPHERE THROUGH LITERATURE AND ART
In this course, we will explore the relationship between human beings and the environment in literature, art, and scientific essay. Employing a comparative approach, we will consider various cultural perspectives on the topic. These include literary and art criticism compared with scientific theory; British, U.S., Latin American, and Spanish authors and artists; indigenous and non-native cultures’ understanding of human relationship to nature; and some historical development of theories and disciplines.
THE PLACE OF THE HONORS PROGRAM IN THE CURRICULUM

The full Interdisciplinary Honors Program consists of 22 credits: two two-credit courses, Writing in the Disciplines (IDHP 210-220), and three two-semester Honors seminars. Completion of the Program fulfills the following elements of the core curriculum: all of the Ways of Knowing courses except the Scientific Perspectives, the core seminars FILA 101 and GLST 201, the Writing Intensive requirement and College Writing. For seminars which include a religious studies or scientific component, that seminar may be substituted for one of the two courses required in that area; in this case, an additional Ways of Knowing course is required. An advantage of this program is that fewer credits than usual are required to fulfill the core requirements of the College.

Students who complete only part of the Honors Program must satisfy all degree requirements as described in the college catalog, and must therefore match their credits in Honors seminars with those of the core curriculum.

Students may apply credits earned for Honors seminars toward their major field of study or toward a minor at the discretion of the faculty conducting the seminar in consultation with the faculty of the department of the major or minor. Students wishing to apply credits for Honors seminars toward a major or minor should consult the Director of the Honors Program. Students not in the Honors Program who would like to take a specific seminar may contact the Director; however, preference is given to students pursuing the complete program.

STRUCTURE OF SEMINARS

Approximate Honors seminar size is twelve students and two faculty members. Meetings are conducted primarily by group discussion, but all types of experience and activity are included as appropriate—lectures, demonstrations, field trips, audiovisual experiences and more. These are always oriented toward growth in interdisciplinary understanding, discussion, and writing. Performance in discussion and performance in writing are emphasized equally in assigning grades.

Most Honors seminars meet regularly for a two-hour session once a week. In addition, an unscheduled third hour is available each week as needed; when this hour is used, the entire seminar group decides the scheduling. The use of this hour may vary to suit the content or the approach of individual seminars and faculty.

In their Honors seminars, students are encouraged to learn in an active, independent, and open-ended atmosphere. There are no formal tests or examinations. Evaluation of the students’ work in each Honors seminar is communicated through interviews scheduled twice a semester. At these interviews, the student and both faculty members from an Honors seminar discuss the student’s participation, level of performance, and progress.

To ensure fresh and appealing choices for all students in the Program, each Honors seminar is offered for a maximum of three years. Honors seminars may be offered by any faculty member with at least one year of full-time teaching experience at Chestnut Hill College.
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

The Interdisciplinary Honors Program provides a dynamic learning situation which fosters growth through interaction of persons and sharing of ideas. Competition for grades is strongly discouraged; the members of each seminar, faculty and students, work to establish an atmosphere of collaborative learning.

The invitation to participate in the Honors Program is an expression of confidence in the student’s ability to achieve a high level of academic performance. However, enrollment in the Program is no guarantee of high grades. Honors students are expected to earn a grade of “B” or higher in each Honors course. When a student earns a grade below “B” in an Honors course, the Director of the Program will consult with the Honors Program faculty and with the student to ascertain whether it is in the best interest of the student and of the Honors Program for the student to continue in the Program. However, first-year students will not be dropped from the Program after the first semester because of grades.
ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM

Participants in the Interdisciplinary Honors Program are selected from among qualified and interested applicants to the college. Selection is based on the applicant’s interest in the Program, test scores, high school record, writing sample, and personal interview. Only a limited number of students can be accepted each year. Because special enthusiasm and a variety of viewpoints are needed to facilitate learning through discussion, it is not necessarily applicants who rank highest academically who are admitted into the Honors group.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO THE INTERDISCIPLINARY HONORS PROGRAM

• A completed application to Chestnut Hill College; directions and application forms are available from the Admissions Office.

• A completed application form available at [http://www.chc.edu/interdisciplinaryhonorsprogram/](http://www.chc.edu/interdisciplinaryhonorsprogram/) in which the student states his/her reasons for wishing to participate, the contributions s/he feels s/he can make to the Program, and the ways in which the Honors Program will help him/her to attain his/her educational goals.

• A visit to campus and personal interview with the Program Director; if necessary, telephone interviews may be arranged. If students wish to stay overnight on campus, they should contact the Admissions Office.

Applications received by early April will be given full consideration.

Address inquiries and correspondence to the Director:

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[http://www.chc.edu/interdisciplinaryhonorsprogram/](http://www.chc.edu/interdisciplinaryhonorsprogram/)