

# **San Jacinto College**

# **Honors Program**

**Student Guide Book 2017-18**

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## I. Overview

### *A. Purpose*

The Honors Program offers academically talented and highly motivated students special opportunities for enriched learning, recognition, and personal growth. The program combines a stimulating range and depth of scholarly pursuits with an interdisciplinary approach to learning.

### *B. Goal*

The goal of the San Jacinto College Honors Program is to create honors students who are independent-minded critical thinkers and to instill a love of learning coupled with the skills necessary to excel at the a four-year transfer institution or in the workplace.

### *C. Structure*

The Honors Program operates as one unified program across all three campuses. Students may take courses and participate in activities on any one or all of the three campuses. Each campus maintains an honors room and resources for honors student use. The Honors Council members work collaboratively to guide the program.

## II. Honors Program Academic Criteria

### *A. Admission to the Honors Program*

There is no fee associated with admission to the Honors Program. To qualify for admission into the Honors Program, a student must satisfy one of the academic criteria below.

Documentation (official transcripts) must be provided:

- Continuing SJC students, transfer students, and Dual Credit/Early College High School/MECA students with **at least** 12 college credit hours and a 3.25 cumulative GPA, or students who are members of PTK are eligible to apply for admission to the SJC Honors Program.
- First-Time-In-College (FTIC) students, Dual Credit/Early College High School/MECA/Home-schooled students with **fewer than** 12 college credit hours who meet one of the following documented criteria are eligible to apply for admission to the SJC Honors Program:
  - 3.25+ accredited high school GPA
  - Score of 4 or 5 on an Advanced Placement (AP) exam
  - Top 20% of high school graduating class
  - Minimum SAT score of 1100 (i.e., critical reading and math combined)
  - Minimum ACT score of 26
  - Approval of the director or campus coordinator after a personal interview
- Returning or non-traditional students who have completed at least 12 college credit hours in the previous five years with a 3.25+ cumulative GPA for the most recent 12 college credit hours are eligible to apply for admission to the SJC Honors Program.
- Students who do not meet the admission requirements can petition the campus coordinators or the director for admission. They will then meet individually with the campus coordinator or director who may waive the requirements and allow a student admission. They must then meet the requirement of all students to continue in the program.

### ***B. Admissions Process***

The Honors Program accepts admission applications on a rolling basis throughout the academic year. The Honors Program admission application is available through several sources: an online application, a PDF on the Honors Program website at [www.sanjac.edu/honors](http://www.sanjac.edu/honors); hard-copies are available in the honors room on each campus; students may contact their campus honors coordinator or the district administrative office and request an application as an e-mail attachment or as a hard copy sent via the U.S. Postal Service.

Students must submit a completed application with all official transcripts from accredited institutions and documentation verifying eligibility based on one of the criteria stated above. Home-schooled students are required to submit scores from one of the following tests: PSAT, SAT, ACT, IOWA, or Stanford. The IOWA or Stanford test must be administered by a non-family member. Once the application is received by the administrative office, the review process takes up to two weeks. Students are notified by San Jacinto student email of their admission status.

### ***C. Retention in the Honors Program***

To remain in the Honors Program, students must maintain good academic standing and ACTIVE status within the program. To remain in good standing a student must keep a cumulative college GPA of 3.00 or better. To maintain ACTIVE status within the Honors Program, a student must successfully complete an honors-designated course or honors contract each semester or must have already completed fifteen hours of honors-designated courses or honors contracts.

Academic progress will be monitored after each semester. Students who fail to maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA or ACTIVE status will be placed on probation. The student will have one semester to raise the GPA to 3.0 or successfully complete an Honors course. Once on probation, the Honors Program District Director must be consulted before the student will be allowed to enroll in additional honors courses. Furthermore, students on probation may not be allowed to travel or participate in other honors activities. If a student fails to achieve good standing or ACTIVE status after one semester on probation, the student will no longer be part of the Honors Program. Students who are suspended from the program may apply for re-admission if their cumulative GPA is raised to 3.25.

### ***D. ACTIVE Status and Participation***

Members of the Honors Program are required to enroll in an honors course section or undertake an honors contract to be considered an ACTIVE member of the program. A member of the Honors Program having completed at least 15 hours of honors coursework shall be considered thereafter an ACTIVE member of the program (applies to students taking classes starting Fall 2017), given that he or she maintains a 3.0 cumulative GPA, and will be afforded all the benefits of the program.

## **III. Honors Coursework**

### ***A. Courses***

Honors courses are offered in a variety of disciplines. Smaller in size (capped at 18), honors sections are designed so that students are able to interact closely with the professor, creating

an enriching and rewarding academic experience. Many honors courses are seminar-style in character. This type of class requires students to think analytically and critically about the course material, and provides a high level of interaction and discussion in the classroom.

Coursework incorporates innovative and engaging content delivery and assignments in order to promote academic inquiry, more sophisticated thinking, and the lifelong pursuit of learning. In addition to meeting the basic core competencies of the regular curriculum, Honors courses also include many of the following components:

- Group project work, which fosters a collaborative and collegial learning environment
- Interdisciplinary linkage, allowing students to make broad analytical links between different courses and fields of study
- Writing component, including critical essays, responses, and journal entries
- Local, regional or national guest speakers and experts in the field
- Research and writing skills, resulting in a well-documented research paper or project
- Primary and secondary sources as course material, rather than relying solely on the department textbook
- Activities, projects, assignments, classwork and methods of evaluation that encourage critical thinking, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating
- Student presentations and oral work to encourage interaction and promote speaking skills
- Interactive and creative media and technology use by the students and the professor above and beyond basic course content delivery – podcasts, class videos, blogs, wikis, webpage development, etc.
- Seminar style discussion, which encourages in-depth exploration of subject matter, critical thinking and analytical thought
- Role playing/debate/simulations, allowing for interaction, cooperation and collaboration in the classroom and development of critical thinking and analytical skills

In order for the course to receive honors designation, a student must earn a grade of at least a “B.”

### ***B. Registering for Honors Courses: Step-by-Step:***

Dual Credit students will need to see the Dual Credit coordinator or their high school counselor for registration.

First, find out the honors courses that are being offered at each campus. A list of courses is available in the honors room on each campus. You may also download a PDF of the course offerings at the Honors Program website: [www.sanjac.edu/honors](http://www.sanjac.edu/honors). In addition, you may search for honors courses using the Course Finder online:

1. Access the San Jacinto website: [www.sanjac.edu](http://www.sanjac.edu)
2. Move the cursor over —**Current Students**
3. Click on the —**Course Finder** link under the —**Academics** column.
4. Select the semester for which you are seeking honors courses.
5. Select the term for which you are seeking honors courses.

6. Select the campus for which you are seeking courses.
7. Using the —**search by keyword**, type —honors.¶
8. A list of honors courses offered will populate the screen.

If you are an FTIC (First-Time-In-College) student:

1. Visit the San Jacinto College Web page at [www.sanjac.edu](http://www.sanjac.edu).
2. Click on —**future students**; a drop down menu will appear.
3. Go to the —**Admissions**¶ column and select —**Register for Classes**.¶
4. Call 281.998.6150 to speak with counselor or educational planner or simply visit campus for a one-on-one consultation to lead you through the rest of the process.

If you are a continuing student or re-admitted student:

1. Visit <http://www.sanjac.edu/soslogin>.
2. To login: enter your generated ID number (capital G with the assigned eight digit number).
3. Enter your six-digit PIN (provided during the admission process).
4. Select —**My Registration**” and follow the system prompts.
5. Select your desired registration term.
6. Select —**Step 5, register for Classes**, and enter the CRN numbers for desired classes. Select —**Submit Changes**” to save the requested classes or to determine if there are registration restrictions. When the schedule is correct, select the —**View My Schedule**” link at the bottom of the page to have the system calculate the tuition and fees due. **NOTE:** Submitting changes will add charges if classes have started.
7. Select —**View Fee Assessment**”” and then select **Student Account Suite**” button. Refer to **Registration and Payment Schedule** for payment deadlines.
8. Print your schedule and/or payment confirmation before you exit the system and carefully check that it is correct. Late changes result in additional charges.

Occasionally, an honors course in which you wish to enroll is filled to capacity. Honors courses are capped at 18. In this case, you may receive an error message stating —Reserve Closed. In order to keep courses small, the Honors Program rarely grants overrides. In this case, you will need to choose another course in which to enroll.

### *C. Honors Contracts*

#### **Honors contracts are not allowed in distance learning courses.**

The Honors Contract (also known as honors-by-contract) may be an option for students if a specific honors-designated course or section is not offered, or if a student wishes to explore a specific subject not offered as an honors-designated course. Before asking a professor if they will supervise an Honors Contract the student must get approval from their campus coordinator. The contract project, and the decision to allow a student to complete an honors contract, is left to the discretion of the professor. The professor may also stipulate additional requirements for earning honors credit (for example, requiring that the student earn the grade of —A in the regular course). Once the contract option has been discussed with the professor, the student must complete and submit the contract proposal form by the deadline specified (generally, the third Friday of the semester) directly to the Honors Coordinator on the campus where the course is being taught. The proposal must then be approved by the campus Honors Contract Committee and the District Honors Contract Committee. This is to insure that all contracts adhere to the program standards for rigor and quality.

While the emphasis of the Honors Program is on taking honors courses, the contract option may be used by all students in good-standing with the program. Honors contracts follow the same criteria as the honors courses. The goal of the contract is to simulate, as much as possible, the experience of honors coursework. Based on the Oxford-Tutorial and the Cambridge-Supervision learning models, projects, research, Service Learning, or other activities should be a collaborative effort between the student and professor, with a scope and depth not covered in regular coursework. This project should be of a quality that would allow it to be presented at a conference such as the National Conference of Undergraduate Research or the Great Plains Honors Conference. Creativity and novel approaches to exploring the subject matter are encouraged. While all contracts will have a significant writing component, the following can be included as additional components of an honors contract:

- Interdisciplinary linkage, allowing students to make broad analytical links between different courses and fields of study
- Writing component, including critical essays, responses, and journal entries
- Utilization of local, regional, or national experts in the field
- Development of research and writing skills, resulting in a well-documented research paper or project
- Use of primary and secondary sources as course material, rather than relying solely on the department textbook
- Activities, projects, and research that encourages critical thinking, analysis, evaluation, and creation
- Use of presentations and oral work to encourage interaction and promote speaking skills
- Interactive and creative use of media and technology above and beyond basic course content – podcasts, class videos, blogs, wikis, webpage development, etc.

While completing the contract, students work in close collaboration with the professor to establish a project or to conduct research that goes above and beyond the regular course content as outlined in the course syllabus. Several times a semester the student and professor should meet to track the progress of the contract, in order to ensure that the student is completing the project to the professor's satisfaction and at an honors level. The Honors Program encourages students to present their contract project to the class at the end of the semester or to submit proposals to one of several honors conferences which our students and faculty attend.

#### ***D. SJC Honors Program Contracts: Step-by-Step***

1. Before asking a professor if they will supervise an Honors Contract the student must get approval from either their campus coordinator.
2. Before approaching an instructor to propose an honors contract or project, the student should read through all of these steps.
3. When approaching the instructor to request that he or she guide the honors contract or project, a student should be sure to have reviewed the syllabus and attended one week of classes in order to better formulate one or more project ideas. Students who are motivated to formulate their own projects, on a topic about which they have a question, are usually more engaged in the project and are

more compelled to complete it. This is the student's project, not the instructor's; the student must take responsibility and the instructor will act as a guide through the process.

4. A student should:
  - a. e-mail, call, or visit the instructor to schedule an appointment (usually 30 minutes) to discuss a project. A student should be professional, punctual, and respectful. Instructors are happy to guide motivated students through a project, but they are busy.
  - b. review the proposal form with the instructor. Ask questions. Be certain that he/she understands what is expected from you.
  - c. set up a regular appointment schedule and stick to it.
  - d. provide the instructor with the weekly assignments or updates that he or she requests.
  - e. e-mail, e-mail, e-mail! Check your San Jac e-mail and maintain communication with your instructor.
5. If an instructor requires a presentation to the class or to another audience, the student should plan ahead for any audio-visual equipment necessary. Also the presentation should be well rehearsed.
6. The project must be turned in on or before your final class meeting. Do not wait until finals week.

#### ***E. Honors Curriculum***

Honors students must complete 15 credit-hours in honors sections or contracts. (This applies to students who begin their honors coursework in Fall 2017)

#### ***F. Honors Recognition***

Students who complete an honors-designated course or successfully fulfill an honors contract shall have the course designated on their transcript as "honors course".

## **IV. Graduation with Honors**

### ***A. Honors Graduate Designation Criteria***

To be recognized as an Honors Graduate, a student must successfully complete at least 15 hours of honors work with a minimum grade of "B" in each honors course. Additionally, the student must have an overall (cumulative) GPA of 3.00 or better. Students who achieve this goal will earn the designation "Honors Graduate." This designation will be noted on their transcript and the student shall receive a certificate recognizing this achievement.

### ***B. Distinguished Honors Graduate Designation Criteria***

To be recognized as an Honors Graduate, a student must successfully complete at least 24 hours of honors work with a minimum grade of "B" in each honors course. Additionally, the student must have an overall (cumulative) GPA of 3.00 or better. Students who achieve this goal will earn the designation "Honors Graduate." This designation will be noted on their transcript and the student shall receive a certificate recognizing this achievement.



***C. Participation in the Graduation Ceremony***

Honors graduates earning a cumulative GPA of 3.00 and who have applied for graduation and notified the Honors Program office will receive an Honors Program medallion and will be recognized in the printed graduation ceremony program.

***D. Deadline for Honors Graduate Designation***

Students must earn the Honors Program Graduate designation by their graduation date. Students cannot receive Honors Graduate Designation status for Honors Program classes taken after their graduation.

**V. Scholarships*****A. Scholarship Application Process***

In order to be considered for an Honors Program scholarship, a student, whether FTIC, continuing, transfer, or non-traditional, must complete the scholarship application. An application for admission to the Honors Program must also be completed if the student is not a current member of the program. Current members of the Honors Program must be in good standing (3.0 cumulative GPA) and must be an ACTIVE member of the program in order to be eligible for the Honors Scholarship (see definition of ACTIVE status, page 8). Honors Scholarship recipients will be selected by the Honors Scholarship Selection Committee, which is composed of faculty and staff who serve on the Honors Council.

The Honors Scholarship application is available online at [www.sanjac.edu/honors](http://www.sanjac.edu/honors).

Students must submit a completed scholarship application by the stated deadline.

**DEADLINES:** The deadlines for the scholarship applications are determined by the San Jacinto College Foundation. They will be posted online.

After the deadline the application review process will begin by the Honors Scholarship selection committee. Applications are assessed and ranked based on merit. Student recipients are notified by the San Jacinto College Foundation using the students' San Jacinto College email if they receive a scholarship. Students who are offered an Honors Scholarship must complete and return an acceptance form and a statement of relations.

***B. Maintaining the Scholarship Award***

Students must maintain a 3.00 cumulative GPA, remain enrolled in honors coursework, and meet any other established criteria in order to maintain the Honors Program scholarship for the academic year or semester. Failure to meet the scholarship requirements will result in the student being placed on probation. If a student forfeits the scholarship, he or she must reapply in order to be eligible to receive another scholarship. Honors Scholarship funds may be used for tuition, fees, and books. All Honors Scholarship recipients are advised to pay for their courses by the payment deadlines, after which they will receive a refund.

In order to maintain the scholarship, the following requirements must be met:

- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Complete at least one honors course or contract with a grade of —B or higher each semester

- If honors coursework is completed (15 credit hours), the student must remain ACTIVE in the Honors Program by engaging in Honors activities, courses, or contracts

To keep the scholarship award, students must meet the requirements above. Academic progress will be monitored after each semester by the Honors Program staff. Students who fail to meet the criteria will be placed on Honors Program probation. The student will have one semester to raise the GPA AND successfully complete an Honors course. If a student fails to achieve good standing and ACTIVE status after the probationary period, the scholarship will be forfeited.

## **VI. Honors Room**

### ***A. Purpose***

The purpose of the Honors Room is to serve as a focal point for planning, organizing, and student interaction. It is intended to be a comfortable space that Honors students can use for studying, tutoring, social events & activities, and academic collaboration. Students are expected to be on their best behavior in the room, and will treat it as a place for study and collegial interaction.

### ***B. Rules and Regulations***

Use of the Honors Room is a privilege, not an entitlement; it is restricted to current members of the Honors Program. Guests are welcome, but must be accompanied by a current member of the Honors Program, and are expected to check in with the staff-on-duty. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful of their honors colleagues, the San Jacinto College faculty whose offices and classrooms border the honors room, and the staff who maintain the honors room. The honors room will operate according to the following rules and regulations:

- Students must clean up spills, trash, computer paper, and other messes
- Students must be mindful of those studying in the room—no yelling, screaming, or loud singing
- Students will limit document printing to 5 – 8 pages per day
- Students will dispose food and containers in the refrigerator
- Students will not leave personal property in the honors room
- Students will maintain media volume at a moderate level
- Students will be respectful of others regarding media—no explicit or indecent lyrics
- Students will return furniture and supplies back to their proper locations

Any student failing to follow the room rules will be asked to leave, and may lose the privilege of using the room.

### ***C. Hours and Staffing***

Honors room hours vary at each campus, dependent on staffing, the college calendar (holiday, summer hours, etc.), and usage. Because of security issues, the honors rooms will only be open when a member of the honors staff is present.

### ***D. Refreshments***

Refreshments (snacks, drinks, etc.) will be provided in the honors room for a minimal charge, which allows the program to purchase more refreshments. Students are expected to pay for their refreshments. If students do not pay for the refreshments, the program will cease the practice. Students are allowed to bring food into the honors rooms and are expected to clean up after themselves.

## **VII. Communications**

### ***A. E-mail***

The Honors Program contacts its members primarily through their SJC e-mail accounts. Everyone should set up their SJC e-mail accounts and check it daily.

### ***B. Blackboard***

The Honors Program maintains a Blackboard organization, which will be used to post announcements and to send e-mail messages to students. The Honors Program support staff will enroll students into the Honors Blackboard group so that students will receive the latest Program information.

## **VIII. Activities and Events**

An important facet of the Honors Program will be to provide scholarly and personally enriching activities that will encourage students to develop a lifelong commitment to learning. These activities will emphasize personal growth, academic exploration, community building, and collegial and cooperative relationships. Activities can include:

***A. Conference Participation*** – The Honors Program participates in various honors conferences offered throughout the school year. Conferences give students the opportunity to interact with other honors students and faculty from the area, the region, and the country. Attendance at honors conferences allows students to see the work that students at four-year institutions are engaged in and to have the opportunity to present their own research and creative projects to other highly-motivated students.

Students must be in good standing and maintaining ACTIVE status to attend conferences. Events with travel include: the National Collegiate Honors Council conference, held in various locations across the country; the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, held in various locations across the country; and the Great Plains Honors Council conference, held in various locations throughout the southwest.

The Gulf Coast Intercollegiate Honors Council coordinates an annual retreat and conference, held in various locations throughout the Greater Houston area. Students are encouraged, but not required to present at this conference in order to participate. Students must be in good standing to participate.

***B. Lunch seminars, round-table discussions, and topical forums*** – Students and faculty meet over lunch to discuss and explore a concept, theme, or academic area of interest.

***C. Honors Educational Outings*** – Honors outings are characteristically academic, cultural, or social. Activities might include: the symphony, art museum, theater or other fine arts outings, visits to the science museums, historical exploration of Houston, or Medical Center tours.

***D. Social Events*** – The Honors Program occasionally hosts various academic, educational, and critically analytical movies for the San Jacinto community. Students, faculty, and staff would gather for a movie, pizza, and discussion.

***E. San Jacinto Campus Service & Leadership*** – Students will continue to be active participants in the San Jacinto community. It is important that students support the campus and develop a personal investment in the school.

***F. Extracurricular Volunteer & Service Learning Activities*** – Students will continue to be active participants in volunteering efforts throughout the community. Previous volunteer efforts have included Habitat for Humanity, the Ronald McDonald House, Hurricane Katrina relief efforts, food drives, and toy collections.

### ***Questions or Comments?***

Please contact your primary campus Honors Coordinator with any questions or comments.

***Appendix A. Honors Course Tracking*****Course Semester Grade  
*Academic Planning***

Semester One: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Semester Two: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Semester Three: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Semester Four: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Semester Five: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Semester Six: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.