HONORS COLLEGE

The Georgia State University Honors College offers motivated undergraduate students the experience of a highly selective small college combined with the breadth of programs and opportunities of a large public research university in the heart of Atlanta. Our mission is to engage a diverse and talented community of undergraduate scholars with experiences that prepare them for a lifetime of achievement.

An Honors Education

Georgia State has consistently displayed an enterprising and independent spirit along with a staunch commitment to ensure that students from all backgrounds achieve their academic and career goals. The Georgia State Honors College, established in 2011 and born out of the university’s strategic plan, is a vital part of this mission. It is a place where the most intellectually curious and intensely motivated undergraduates explore a challenging interdisciplinary curriculum, engage with outstanding faculty, conduct research with top scientists and scholars, and graduate ready to embark on a lifetime of achievement.

An honors education encompasses more than classroom and lab experiences. The honors experience is the product of integrative experiences that connect the college and the university to Atlanta and the international community. We emphasize risk-taking, creativity and intellectual entrepreneurship. Our Honors College is a laboratory known for embracing new initiatives and encouraging the kinds of outside-the-classroom experiences that drive personal growth and accomplishment.

Vision

The Honors College will be a national model for developing undergraduate scholars into global leaders. We will be at the forefront of the university’s efforts to provide the most motivated and engaged students with unparalleled undergraduate educational experiences. Our students and graduates, prepared for a lifetime of achievement, will include public and private-sector leaders, as well as Goldwater, Marshall, Gates and Rhodes scholars. We will be a national epicenter for excellence and opportunity.

The Honors Difference

Our student body is distinctively diverse. As an Honors College we closely reflect the composition of the overall Georgia State student body, more than half of whom are Pell-eligible and
first-generation college students. We pride ourselves on demonstrating that students from all backgrounds can achieve academic and career success at high rates. We are at the forefront of the university’s efforts to provide motivated and engaged students with unparalleled undergraduate educational experiences.

We are home to Georgia State’s most innovative teachers and intellectually curious students. The college nurtures the development of critical thinking and inquiry skills through small seminars and mentoring of research projects from engaged faculty. It is a community that encourages and rewards curiosity.

Our interdisciplinary seminars push intellectual boundaries, fueling discussions on topics such as The Concept of Zero, Living and Serving with Homeless People and The Integration of Technology, Pedagogy and Philosophy. Full of curious students from dozens of degree programs, these seminars push students to examine their worldviews, banish complacency and challenge themselves to move beyond their chemistry or art classes to embrace what might be uncomfortable or difficult.

As an example, the Honors College offered a seminar on the legacy of Alonzo F. Herndon, in which honors students learned about risks and took a few themselves. Atlanta’s role as the center of the Civil Rights Movement makes it an ideal laboratory for honors students to study vital, present-day, human rights issues. Notably, not one student enrolled in the course was a history major. The students—who came from neuroscience, film, art and design, marketing and psychology—left their comfort zones to crawl through property records, dust off archival documents and learn new ways of developing knowledge. Initially wary of how their research would come together and how it would be used in this experimental seminar, students learned to become comfortable with ambiguity and allowed an organic process to lead the course.

The value of an honors education is more demonstrable today than ever before. By combining the best aspects of a more traditional liberal education with the applied practice of skills and experiences, the Honors College gives students the ability to put their knowledge to work in the world. The challenges students face as they attempt difficult or uncomfortable tasks help them build and then use the practical skills they’ll need when they come up against obstacles in their lives after college.

An honors education is an experience beyond university boundaries. National and international conferences for presentation of research, internships in town and abroad, summer research programs and service opportunities are valuable additions to an undergraduate education and offer students the opportunity to experience the world from a different perspective. Honors students who take advantage of these opportunities learn to solve problems, think critically and embrace a global mindset, qualities that prepare them for the years after college.

In Practice

Ronald Shanderson ’16, a shining example of our Honors College experience, was awarded a prestigious Goldwater Scholarship, the first in the Honors College’s history. Ronald works in the Transcription Regulation and Immune Response Lab at Georgia State and contributes to research on how inhibiting enzymes that cause changes in gene expression could decrease chemotherapy resistance in ovarian cancer patients. He used his Goldwater Scholarship to spend the summer conducting research at the University of California at San Francisco.

Recent alumnus Shelby Lohr ’14, was Georgia State’s first finalist for the prestigious Marshall Scholarship. She earned her master of arts degree from the University of Chicago. During her time at Georgia State, Shelby was awarded the University System of Georgia Outstanding student and received the Provost Award (the highest honor) at the Georgia State Undergraduate Research Conference.

Lucy Felkar ‘15 was awarded a Gilman Scholarship, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, and interned abroad at the Families’ Development Association in Amman, Jordan. After her Gilman experience, she was also awarded the Metropolitan Voter’s Guild Scholarship for academic excellence and the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations’ Malone Fellowship to join a delegation of students and faculty members from across the nation in a study visit to Qatar. In Lucy’s last semester, she rounded out her college experience by interning at the Georgia State Senate with the Georgia Legislative Internship Program.

We know this is just the beginning. Ronald, Shelby and Lucy are three examples of what can happen when our driven students have access to our invaluable resources. Through our innovative programs, faculty mentoring and interdis-
disciplinary curriculum, our students are assembling the toolkits for a lifetime of achievement.

The Next Level
Scholarships: Access to Excellence

Honors College scholarships afford our students opportunities that prepare them to succeed in and contribute to our increasingly interdependent world. The Presidential Scholarship allows the Honors College to recruit well-rounded, high-achieving and talented high school seniors who might otherwise choose to attend private or out-of-state institutions. Once Presidential Scholars enroll at Georgia State, the scholarship provides recipients with rigorous curricular opportunities, enriching co-curricular experiences, mentoring and access to faculty-mentored research. The Honors College awards nine Presidential Scholarships. However, our goal is to expand the program to 40 scholarships. At the same time, we hope to increase the value, benefits and scope of the scholarship program.

Merit-based and performance-based scholarships ensure that all Honors College students will become tomorrow’s citizen-scholars and thought leaders across all sectors of our society. Through the opportunities our scholarships provide, recipients master critical thinking skills, excel in oral and written communication, acquire broad interdisciplinary knowledge and develop strong interpersonal and leadership skills. They also understand how to disseminate ideas, solve problems with agility, analyze and synthesize information with sound judgment, appreciate the value of diverse perspectives and develop a keen sense of empathy, awareness and civic responsibility. They remain curious and adaptable throughout their lives, always seeking opportunities for growth and enrichment.

Endowed Scholarships: Providing Access to Excellence
- 40 Presidential scholarships fully funded by the Honors College ($15 million)
- 210 merit-based recruitment scholarships for incoming students ($13 million)
- 100 performance-based scholarships for “walk-on” Honors students ($6.5 million)
- Expendable fund to be awarded to students who show outstanding ability ($500,000)

Global Honors

The goal of the Global Honors Experience is to provide every Honors College student (regardless of financial circumstances) the opportunity to travel internationally through a range of study and/or internship experiences.

The Global Honors Experience will be a transforming opportunity. Our goal is ambitious. We know of no other urban, public university Honors College with a similar goal. Our increasingly interdependent world will require the next generation of leaders, in public and private sectors, to have mastered multiple critical-thinking skills. Global competencies will require the ability to analyze and synthesize comparative and cross-cultural information with sound judgment, an openness to different thoughts, ideas and perspectives, curiosity, adaptability and a highly developed sense of empathy, awareness and concern.

Global Honors
- 80 Endowed study abroad opportunities per year ($10 million)
- 200 non-endowed study abroad opportunities ($1 million)

Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders

The LEAD with Honors certificate program cultivates leadership skills and abilities. The curriculum includes six courses that explore leadership styles, group dynamics and models of leadership throughout history. Beginning with a seminar in leadership in which students interact with leaders across many Atlanta sectors and continuing with practical opportunities and courses to further leadership skills, the program includes a year-long internship followed by a thesis related to a leadership issue encountered during the internship. Students end the program working in teams as consultants to solve pressing problems for local organizations. The capstone experience develops important team, client and project management skills while drawing on the students’ knowledge and resources available at an urban research university. This combination of coursework, practical skill development, work experience, soft skills and research moves students far beyond the classroom and is well worth the journey.

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The LEAD with Honors certificate program will develop diverse leaders who reflect the changing workforce of today’s companies and institutes of higher learning. These student leaders will be adept at developing mentor relationships and working with leaders in varied fields. They will be able to challenge others because of their practical experiences during their time in the program.

Our goal is to expose students to leadership success models that enable them to learn from individual and shared experiences. We intend to complement the certificate program with a distinguished lecture series. Top innovators and thinkers will share their knowledge and connections in varied fields, providing students with direct access to leaders they can emulate.

**Undergraduate Research: The Door to Discovery**

The Honors College provides undergraduates the opportunity to engage in research and creative works. Students across campus assist in labs, compose music, serve as editors and build business plans. Students have many opportunities to get involved in undergraduate research, including an Honors thesis, university assistantship, the Georgia State Undergraduate Research Conference and Discovery, our undergraduate research journal.

Students are encouraged from their first year at Georgia State to engage in research, from attending seminars to engaging with faculty and staff through our university assistantship program. Once students develop their research they are invited to present it at our undergraduate research conference and publish in our research journal. The culminating research experience is for students to write an honors thesis or complete an equivalent honors project.

Honors College students may apply for limited travel funds to support the presentation of undergraduate research at disciplinary, regional or national conferences. We hope to further develop this program to provide greater opportunities to support our students in sharing their research endeavors.

**Undergraduate Research** ($3 million)

**Internships: A Career-Defining Experience**

An internship can change your life. A recent National Associate of Colleges and Employers survey indicated that 70% of interns receive full-time jobs as a result of their internship experience. Through our internship advisement and opportunities, we will be a springboard to a lifetime of achievement.

The Honors College has two major internship programs for students, the London Experience and the Capital Experience. The London Experience allows Honors College students from all majors to intern in London and other parts of the United Kingdom. The global experiences of the London Experience help interns acquire an international perspective while gaining valuable career insight. The Capital Experience allows Honors College students to gain experience in the state’s and nation’s capital cities. With a broad selection of academic programs and unique educational opportunities, the Capital Experience enhances undergraduate education, increases the visibility of Georgia State and the Honors College in the nation’s capital and connects students to Georgia State alumni working in both capital cities.

**Endowed support for U.S.-based internships** ($1 million)

**Why Give to the Honors College**

The Honors College is a magnet that attracts high-ability students to Georgia State. Our students strive to maximize every opportunity an Honors education provides. Your belief in our vision can transform their lives. Your support can provide the experiences and opportunities needed for our students to fulfill their promise.
“The Honors College provided a stimulating forum for me to interact with and learn from my peers and faculty in other disciplines.”

— Kareem Alexis ’15 (Duke Medical School)

“Georgia State has provided me with the opportunities to accomplish anything and everything that I chose. The Presidential Scholarship has exposed me to opportunities that never would have been available otherwise, and has opened many doors for me. I have been able to pursue study abroad programs, research and classes of interest to me because of the opportunities presented to me by this university, and that has made my time here incredibly rewarding, busy and exciting.”

— Kelly McCahill ’14

“All the great training I received at the Honors College helped prepare me to not only do well, but to perform exceptionally in grad school. My thesis adviser at Chicago shared with me that my masters, thesis was one of the finest he’d read in his 15 years at the University of Chicago. I know that it was because of all of the help I received during my undergraduate years that I was prepared to take on my graduate studies.”

— Shelby Lohr ’14

“My experiences abroad and internship profoundly influenced my growth as both a student and a person. I will be forever grateful to Georgia State and the Honors College for these opportunities.”

— Cody Provence ’14

“Working as an intern is definitely not easy, but it’s also very rewarding. My internship has taught me so much about what it takes to work full time in a professional environment. It taught me what it was like out there in the working world where you have to combine your accessible knowledge with people skills and teamwork to make sure you leave a good impression.”

— Bruce Lampros ’17, Karla Otto Intern, Fall 2014

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