

**Florida Atlantic University
Honors Administrative Manual**



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Section 1

Promoting Exchange of Faculty Members in the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College with Other Units of the University

Purpose: To promote greater interaction among faculty members of the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College and other units of Florida Atlantic University; to support the development of the faculty of the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College; to enhance the educational experience of students throughout the campuses and programs of Florida Atlantic University.

Note: While no policy currently *prevents* faculty members in the Honors College from teaching a course elsewhere in the University, the ideas explored below are intended to remind those teaching in the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College and their colleagues elsewhere in the University of the wide range of options available to them and to clarify for faculty members the procedure for initiating a teaching exchange with other departments or on other campuses.

Protocol: A faculty member in the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College who wishes to fulfill part of his or her teaching assignment on another campus or for another college of Florida Atlantic University should notify the dean of the Honors College at least twelve months before the start of the academic term in question, whenever practical. To the extent possible given the college's own staffing needs, the dean will work with the dean of the appropriate college and the chair of the appropriate department to accommodate this request in-load. Preference may be given to faculty members who wish to teach:

- a) a seminar in the University Scholars program
- b) an upper division course in the faculty member's academic discipline, or
- c) a graduate course in the faculty member's discipline.

Whenever possible, the dean of the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College will seek to establish a cost neutral course-for-course exchange (e.g., a faculty member from the Department of Chemistry teaches a course in the Honors College in Jupiter while the Honors College faculty member teaches a graduate course in chemistry on the Boca Raton campus). Where course-for-course exchanges are not feasible, reassignments of faculty members who wish to teach for Florida Atlantic University outside the Honors College will still be considered. Whenever possible, course scheduling should be done in such a way as to both minimize the amount of travel required and to accommodate student schedules. For example, courses that meet late in the day for one or two days a week may be preferable to courses that meet mid-day for three or more days a week when faculty travel to other campuses is involved.

Faculty members who are based on one campus but who teach a course on another campus are reminded that they are eligible for a standard mileage reimbursement for

this travel. Faculty members should also be aware that the Faculty Assignment Guidelines of their college may allow these courses to receive additional credit when load assignments are calculated; faculty members should discuss with their dean or department chair whether a load adjustment for travel is provided by their college.

Other means of promoting greater interaction among faculty in the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College and other units of Florida Atlantic University that should be considered or explored in the future include the following:

- a) encouraging faculty members in the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College to offer summer courses for other colleges within Florida Atlantic University
- b) permitting, when financially feasible, faculty members from other units at the University to offer summer courses in the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College (**note:** because of budgetary limitations, course-for-course exchanges should be sought whenever possible)
- c) team-taught courses led by one faculty member in the University Scholars program and one faculty member from the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College (**note:** this arrangement should be arranged in a cost-neutral manner whenever possible)
- d) other types of team-taught courses that allow members of the Honors College to work cooperatively with the faculty of one of the honors programs at Florida Atlantic University (such as an upper division honors program)
- e) with approval of the faculty member teaching the class, providing access to the one-credit Honors College Forum course to high ability students on other campuses through video-conferencing or video recording
- f) with approval of the faculty member teaching the class, providing access to the University Scholars' SLS course to students in the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College through video-conferencing or video recording
- g) permitting students enrolled in either the University Scholars program or the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College to fulfill a certain number of their course requirements through the other's offerings. Permission to fulfill course requirements in this manner would be granted on a case-by-case basis by the administrator responsible for the student's primary honors experience. This permission is granted by the dean of the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College and University Honors programs.

Section 2 Faculty Honors Fellows

Purposes: To provide high ability students at Florida Atlantic University with a broader range of academic areas in both the University Scholars program and at the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College; to raise the profile and distinction of faculty participation in educating honors students at the University; to broaden faculty expertise in honors education; and to enhance the full range of a faculty member's courses through the richness that can result from ongoing intellectual engagement with high ability students.

Program: Florida Atlantic University offers faculty members the opportunity to serve for one semester as a Faculty Honors Fellow. Recipients of this important new distinction would be reassigned from one course of their teaching load to provide service to one of the University's honors experiences, receive a stipend to support their scholarship, and be widely recognized for their significant contribution to the University's mission in enhancing innovative educational opportunities for high ability students.

Rationale: Previously several obstacles faced faculty members who might otherwise have made an important contribution to one of the University's honors experiences. First, certain departments were reluctant to reassign faculty members from a course that generated a large number of student credit hours to an honors course, which typically had a lower student-to-faculty ratio. Second, a department's reluctance to encourage involvement in honors education was exacerbated when a faculty member sought to teach in the University Scholars program or the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College but the faculty member's home department did not receive "credit" for the student credit hours generated. Third, departments that *were* compensated for reassigning faculty members to teach an honors course typically received a buy-out sufficient only for hiring an adjunct instructor (without benefits); there was thus very little incentive for a department to encourage, for example, one of its distinguished senior faculty members to teach an honors course when the "return" was likely to be a section taught by an adjunct instructor. Fourth, faculty members were sometimes hesitant to teach in an honors program or at the Honors College because they felt it would not be regarded as a significant contribution for the purposes of promotion, tenure, or annual merit decisions. Fifth, faculty members were sometimes hesitant to teach in an honors program or at the Honors College if the assignment involved commuting several times per week to a different campus.

Faculty Honors Fellowships address these obstacles by:

- providing a substantial buy-out to the faculty member's academic department.
- offering the faculty member an attractive teaching assignment, the prestige of receiving a major honor, the possibility of commuting expenses, and funding for research, scholarship, or creative activity.

Implementation:

1. Initially, ten fellows will be selected each academic year.
 - a. Eight fellows will teach in the University Scholars program, two will teach in the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College.
 - b. This number may expand or contract as demand and budgetary considerations change.
2. Faculty members who wish to be considered as Faculty Honors Fellows apply to the University Honors Council. A deadline is chosen by the University Honors Council in accordance with the requirements of course scheduling. The Honors Council selects recipients according to their overall strength as faculty members, their adherence to the criteria for members of the honors faculty (§3), the strength of the course proposal and syllabus that the applicant submits, and the programmatic needs of the University's honors experiences.
3. Each course proposal and syllabus submitted by a faculty member is expected to adhere to the University's guidelines for courses receiving honors credit (see *Honors Curriculum Manual*) and, where applicable, Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) guidelines.
4. Each Faculty Honors Fellow is expected to:
 - a. teach one course in either the University Scholars program or for the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College.
 - b. be widely available outside of class time and regular office hours to students of either the University Scholars program or the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College for the purposes of mentoring, intellectual conversation, guidance, and the general enhancement of the students' academic experience and personal development.
 - c. use their experience in teaching honors students to enhance the quality of instruction they provide to *all* of their students.
5. In selecting Faculty Honors Fellows, preference may be given to:
 - a. proposals that help promote exchanges among the different colleges and campuses of Florida Atlantic University.
 - b. individuals who express or demonstrate a commitment to *ongoing* participation in honors education.
 - c. proposals that help enrich the *breadth* of educational experiences available to high ability students at Florida Atlantic University by extending honors education into previously under-represented academic disciplines.
 - d. proposals that help *balance the range* of academic areas available to high ability students at Florida Atlantic University in any academic year.
6. Initially, each Faculty Honors Fellowship will involve a fund of \$7,000 that will be distributed as follows:
 - a. \$5,000 will be paid to the fellow's academic department as a buy-out, defraying replacement costs for the faculty member.
 - b. \$1,500 will be available to the fellow in support of his or her research, scholarship, or creative activity.
 - c. \$500 will be paid:
 - i. as travel funding to the fellow if the teaching assignment involves commuting to a campus other than his or her home campus.

(Travel reimbursements are subject to current travel policies as set by the provost's office.)

- ii. as a reimbursement to the faculty member's department for supplies and expenses if the teaching assignment involves providing a course on the fellow's home campus.
7. The budget for the Faculty Honors Fellows program is administered through the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.
8. The Dean of Undergraduate Studies will be authorized to assign University Scholars seminars to their appropriate General Education categories and to decide course equivalents. If a faculty member wishes to appeal the dean's decision, a compelling case should be made to the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

Section 3 Honors Faculty Members

At Florida Atlantic University, faculty members who teach courses that receive honors credit should:

1. possess a terminal degree. (**NOTE:** The administrator in charge of the course should notify the Honors Council whenever an exception is made, providing a rationale for the exception.)
2. have demonstrated a strong and ongoing commitment to promoting excellence in honors education.
3. be effective in helping students approach questions from interdisciplinary perspectives.
4. possess a record of substantive and continued scholarly achievement beyond the terminal degree.
5. have experience in encouraging students to learn independently from direct sources of knowledge, such as laboratory experiences, original documents and other primary sources, data collections, service learning opportunities, and the like.
6. not merely convey information at an advanced level but also enhance the critical and creative thinking skills of their students.
7. promote the active or interactive learning of their students through such techniques as coaching, mentoring, inquiry-based methods, supervised independent study, and the like.
8. provide thorough, frequent, and constructive evaluation of students' written and oral work.
9. be willing to involve students in their own research, scholarship, or creative activity.
10. be widely available to students outside of class time and posted office hours for mentoring, conversation, guidance, and the general enhancement of the students' academic experience and personal development.

Faculty members who have taught previously in the University Scholars program can be granted Honors Faculty status upon the recommendation of the director of the University Scholars program. All full-time faculty members whose primary college of appointment is the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College will be granted Honors Faculty status.

Section 4 Degrees with a University Honors Distinction

Students who successfully complete an approved honors program at both the lower-division and upper-division will be eligible for a new recognition from Florida Atlantic University: a baccalaureate degree with a University Honors Distinction. This University Honors distinction is different from current Latin Honors/Baccalaureate Degrees of Distinction in that the new recognition is based, not on cumulative grade point average alone, but also on completion of an enhanced and rigorous curriculum.

High ability students will thus have two attractive options for pursuing an honors education throughout their entire undergraduate program at Florida Atlantic University:

1. The existing Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences offered through the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College.
2. The new opportunity, a degree with University Honors Distinction, which could be offered by any college at the University.

Moreover, the baccalaureate degree with University Honors Distinction can be earned in several ways:

1. By completing Florida Atlantic University's University Scholars Program and an approved FAU honors-in-the-major program.
2. By completing an approved honors associate degree (such as that offered by Palm Beach Community College) and an approved FAU Honors-in-the-Major program.
3. By completing all degree requirements of the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College.

Section 5 Commencement Distinction for Honors Graduates

Students who complete one of Florida Atlantic University's honors opportunities are entitled to special distinctions at commencement. Although exceptions will occur, the following distinctions are commonly used:

1. **Lower-division honors program:** cords (worn over the neck).
2. **Upper-division honors program:** braids (worn over the left shoulder).
3. **Honors degrees (combining both lower- and upper-division):** baccalaureate stoles.

Students receiving any of the distinctions outlined below will have that honor noted in the official commencement program, provided that they are on track to complete all program requirements by the publication deadline for the program.

Students receiving a degree with a **University Honors Distinction** (see §4: this distinction involves successful completion of an approved honors program at both the lower- and upper-divisions) will be recognized through:

1. a white baccalaureate stole with the "University Honors" logo.
2. the words "University Honors" added to the diploma.
3. special recognition when the name of the student is read (such as "Parker K. Doe, *summa cum laude*, University Honors graduate").

Students receiving a degree from the **Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College** will also be recognized through:

1. a distinctive medallion, which may be added to the student's regalia.
2. receipt of an additional certificate listing the student's area of concentration.

Students who successfully complete the **University Scholars** program but who do not qualify for University Honors Distinction will be recognized through:

1. an FAU red and silver cord.
2. the words "University Scholars Honors" added to the diploma.

Students who successfully complete an approved FAU Honors-in-the-Major program but who do not qualify for University Honors Distinction will be recognized through:

1. an FAU silver shoulder braid.
2. the words "Honors in [TITLE OF PROGRAM OR DISCIPLINE]" added to the diploma.

Section 6 Responsibilities and Reporting Relationships

Expanding honors opportunities to students across the colleges and campuses of Florida Atlantic University will involve all the academic units of the institution. For the sake of clarity, the following summary reaffirms existing areas of responsibility and outlines specific reporting relationships for honors opportunities at Florida Atlantic University.

1. The **Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College**. All academic programs report to the dean of the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College who, in turn, reports to the provost.
2. The **University Scholars** program. All seminars are coordinated by the Dean of University Honors Programs who, in turn, reports to the provost.
3. **Upper Division Honors** programs. All academic components of upper division honors programs are coordinated by the chair of the specific academic department who, in turn, reports to the dean of the college. In the case of college-wide programs, all academic components of the programs report to the dean of the college who, in turn, reports to the provost.
4. The **University Honors Council**. The University Honors Council is a subcommittee of the University Undergraduate Program Committee. In addition, the Honors Council advises and assists department chairs and deans who are responsible for their own academic honors programs.

The provost has charged the dean of the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College and University Honors Programs with enhancing honors opportunities across Florida Atlantic University. Respecting the reporting relationship outlined above, the dean will work cooperatively with members of the Honors Council, other deans, and the faculty of the University in order to encourage and explore creative ways of fulfilling this charge.