

# HONORS PROGRAM

## The Helen Hawk Honors Program

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The Mission of the Helen Hawk Louise Honors Program is to foster a high caliber environment where young scholars from virtually all majors actively engage in the pursuit of knowledge. In a series of stimulating classes, highly motivated students are invited to participate in a challenging and exciting interdisciplinary approach to learning. The teaching faculty selected from various disciplines and colleges, serving as course leaders and mentors, guide the students in civic engagement and research projects. Reinforcing meaningful collaborations between students and faculty, the program takes pride in preparing students to become successful and productive members to their respective communities. This mission is in concert with the university mission to promote excellence and student success.

## Helen Hawk Honors Program Requirements

Entering freshmen students are invited to join the program if have a high school GPA of 3.80. Invitees will submit an application which includes two essays and an opportunity to highlight accomplishments as well as to discuss future goals. These requirements result in attracting the top 3-4% of students in our service area. Students must maintain a 3.2 cumulative GPA to remain in the program. (A year's grace period is given to first year freshmen and one semester grace period to sophomore and upper division honors students)

## Course Requirements

Honors students take six honors courses-one each semester during their first two years at the university. A typical full-time course schedule, then, will consist of one honors course and two non-honors courses. Each of these honors courses fulfills one of the general education requirements, so students are not being asked to take any "extra" classes while they participate in the program; they would have to fulfill these general education goals anyway, regardless of their major, career goals, or transfer plans. During their junior and senior years, students take any two of the three required upper-division general education theme courses through the Honors Program (one each year). These courses include added depth and breadth and therefore are more challenging. Each

honors course maintains high standards and are taught by our most accomplished faculty members.

## Helen Hawk Honors Program Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1: Critical and Integrative Thinking

Students will show highly developed skills in critical and integrative thinking

**Outcome 1a:** Students will demonstrate critical reasoning and problem solving by building on the following skills: argument analysis, argument evaluation, and/or argument construction.

**Outcome 1b:** Students will develop insightful connections between ideas, principles, perspectives, and contexts across disciplines.

### Goal 2: Written and Oral Communication

Students will show highly developed written and oral communication skills.

**Outcome 2a:** Students will use engaging and sophisticated prose that skillfully communicates meaning to readers.

**Outcome 2b:** Students will show their ability to use credible and relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate to the discipline and genre of the writing.

**Outcome 2c:** Students will present ideas orally in a concrete and convincing manner, and entertain various viewpoints and respond effectively to those.

### Goal 3: Independent Inquiry and Creative Activity

Students will undertake substantial research and/or creative projects to further independent inquiry.

**Outcome 3a:** Students will make an original academic and/or creative contribution by implementing methods and/or connecting and extending facts and theories from their own discipline.

### Goal 4: Intracultural Understanding and Engaged Citizenship

Students will develop the ground for intercultural understanding and engaged citizenship

**Outcome 4a:** Students will demonstrate sensitive and meaningful responses to other cultural perspectives.

**Outcome 4b:** Students will demonstrate ethical awareness of the consequences of their actions within the broader cultural context.

**Outcome 4c:** Students will demonstrate commitment to collaboratively working within a community context to achieve civic aims and self-development

## Curriculum and Program Objectives and Intended Outcomes

The Honors Curriculum is built around the General Education program.

Courses are offered to allow Honors students to fulfill the basic skills, and the lower, and upper division requirements of the General Education Program. The Honors program also offers a Junior Year Diversity course and every Honors student must complete an Independent Study Project. A special CSUB 1029 First Year Experience course is also offered.

## All Honors Students Must Complete the Honors Independent Study Project (HIP)

For this project students may choose from the following options:

(1) assisting a professor with a research project; (2) proposing and completing a research project of their own choosing; (3) preparing

a paper or presentation for a conference; (3) undertaking an applied experience and writing a reflective project based on that experience; (4) serving as a teaching assistant in a course; leading discussion groups or preparing one or two lectures and writing a reflective paper on this experience. An enriched independent study activity can be connected to a senior project in one's major.

## Enrichment Opportunities

Each honors course features a special "enrichment" activity that distinguishes it as a "special course" that integrates the students' academic and social lives. For example, in the Honors Geology course students may go on a day-long field trip and create a poster presentation on some aspect of the course content. The Honors Music course may allow students to interact one-on-one with a famous composer or performer. The Honors Political Science course may include a field trip to the President Regan Library.

Honors students are also encouraged to engage in **service-learning activities** and **internships** as well as a **Study Abroad experience**. There is also an opportunity each year to present a paper or a poster at a regional or national Honors Conference. All of these activities enhance an Honors student's resume and advancement into further education or a career.

Best of all, **CSUB Helen Hawk Honors** participants go through one course each semester with essentially the same group of people. The goal is to foster a built-in support system that encourages and cultivates a sense of belonging to a program composed of exceptionally motivated, bright, and hard-working students. As a result, the **Helen Hawk Honors Program** provides its participants with a selective honors experience of a private university at the cost of a state-college education—which is a real bargain in today's academic marketplace. In addition, the program prides itself in preparing its students for Global Citizenship.

## Alpha Chi National College Honors Society

The Alpha Chi National College Honors Society was founded in 1922 to recognize and promote academic excellence among college and university students of all disciplines, to encourage a spirit of service and leadership, and to nurture the elements of character that make scholarship effective for good.

The Alpha Chi is a coeducational academic honors society and a member of the Association of College Honor Societies (<https://www.achshonor.org/>). It accepts only students who place in the top ten percent of their class from all academic disciplines. With some 300 chapters, located in almost every state, the organization inducts approximately 10,000 members annually.

The California Iota Chapter of Alpha Chi at California State University, Bakersfield was established seventeen years ago and is our first and only national all-university academic society here at CSUB. To qualify for inclusion in Alpha Chi, students must have completed 24 or more units at CSUB with a GPA of at least 3.8 for juniors, 3.7 for seniors, and 3.8 for graduate students. This places them within the top 3% of our student body.

Alpha Chi members have an opportunity to present a paper or poster each year at a national conference or to participate in a collaborative project with students from five other disciplines. The collaborative project competes for a \$5000.00 award. CSUB students won this prize in 2021.

## Publication Opportunities

The **Alpha Chi members** have an opportunity to submit their research for publication to *Aletheia*, which is a peer reviewed undergraduate journal.

Alpha Chi and Helen Hawk Honors students also have the opportunity to submit their research for publication to *Scribendi*, which is a regional Honors Society peer reviewed undergraduate journal.

## Alpha Chi Scholarships and Fellowships

**Gaston/Nolle Scholarships:** Alpha Chi awards twelve scholarships for undergraduate study. The two top awards among these will be the Edwin W. Gaston, Jr. Scholarships of \$3,000, and the remaining ten (10) will be the Alfred H. Nolle Scholarships of \$2,000 each. The Gaston/Nolle Scholarship competition is open to undergraduate members who will be full-time seniors in the fall of the award year.

**Sledge/Benedict Fellowships:** Alpha Chi awards twelve fellowships for graduate study toward the master's, doctoral, or professional degree. The two top awards among these will be the Robert W. Sledge Fellowships of \$4,000, and the remaining ten (10) will be the H. Y. Benedict Fellowships of \$3,000 each. The Sledge/Benedict Fellowship competition is open to undergraduate members who will be in their first year of graduate or professional study in the fall of the award year.

**Pryor Graduate Fellowships:** The Pryor Fellowship competition is open to graduate student members and alumni members who will be in full-time graduate or professional study in the fall of the award year. Alpha Chi awards up to two Pryor Fellowships, typically one of \$6,000 to a member in a doctoral program who has completed at least two years of graduate or professional study beyond the baccalaureate degree and one of \$4,000 to a member for the first or second year of graduate or professional study beyond the baccalaureate degree.