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Introduction

Welcome to SPEA’s Honors Program! Through this program, SPEA offers exceptional, motivated students the opportunity to deepen their areas of study with advanced coursework, in-depth research and mentorship with faculty, and participation in an enriching community of fellow Honors students.

This documentation will acquaint you with the fundamental requirements expected of all Honors students, as well as ways in which you can enhance the benefits of the Honors program even further. Please read this material prior to your first appointment with a SPEA advisor, developing questions based on the information provided.

We suggest that you refer back to this document throughout your time in SPEA’s Honors Program.

Basic Requirements

SPEA’s Honors Program requires that students:

- Complete three SPEA courses in the degree program at an honors level
- Complete and present an Honors Thesis
- Maintain both a SPEA and a cumulative GPA of 3.500 or above

With careful advance planning and in consultation with an advisor, a student may be able to apply honors-level courses toward the degree requirements without delaying graduation.

**Honors Credit**

There are three ways in which coursework is considered honors level:

*Honors-only courses* are listed in the schedule of classes with “SPEA-S” course codes. These courses are limited to SPEA honors students and Hutton honors students only.

*Combined courses* (also called “track” courses) are listed in the schedule of classes with “SPEA-S” course codes. These courses have some seats reserved for honors students who can receive honors credit by completing advanced coursework as defined by the professor. Students should identify themselves as an honor’s student to the instructor on the first day of class.

Honors credit *by special arrangement* can be received by completing a SPEA course not designated with an “S”
through a formal arrangement with the professor. The student must submit a completed Honors Credit Authorization Form to the Undergraduate Program Office (UPO) before the end of the second week of class. It is recommended that this process be completed during the preceding semester.

Honors Thesis

The honors thesis is a crucial part of the SPEA Honors Program. It is intended to be a high quality document of mutual interest to the student and to the thesis advisor, who must be a member of the SPEA faculty. Students register for three credit hours of thesis work. With careful planning, the thesis may count toward degree requirements. Completed theses are electronically published and accessible to the public. This hyperlink is useful in resumes and graduate school applications. Published theses can be found here.

Maintaining an appropriate timeline for thesis work is critical to success; students should carefully read and view the information provided on the Thesis Resources page. Students should submit the completed Honors Thesis Contract to the UPO for approval midway through the semester prior to the thesis semester. This means students must have a faculty thesis advisor and research idea well in
advance of the thesis semester, ideally at the beginning of the preceding semester.

SPEA Honors Program participants must formally present their completed theses at a symposium held by SPEA at the end of each semester. This event is open to family, friends, peers and faculty.

As members of a mutually supportive intellectual community, and in order to benefit from an important scholarly function of the SPEA Honors Program, students are expected to attend their peers’ thesis presentations.

Dates for the 2015-2016 academic year Thesis Presentations are:

Friday, December 04, 2015. Time and location TBA.

Saturday, April 16, 2016. Time and Location TBA.

Please mark your calendar now.

For more information about thesis presentations please contact SPEA undergraduate programming. speaugp@indiana.edu
Interacting with Faculty

SPEA honors students will have significant interaction with faculty. In many ways, it will be incumbent upon the student to ensure that their academic relationship with faculty goes smoothly and is beneficial to all parties. The following are some suggestions for how to interact with faculty:

*Address faculty members as “Professor” followed by their last name in written and verbal communication, unless invited to do otherwise.* Anyone with a PhD can be addressed as “Doctor” including those not working as professors. On the other hand, all instructors do not hold a PhD. “Professor” is always an appropriate title for faculty. Graduate students working as instructors or teaching assistants will typically announce how to address them. If they do not, it is appropriate to politely ask. When in doubt, it is best to err on the side of formality.

*Respect your professors’ and faculty advisors’ scarce time.* Students receive the greatest benefit from their faculty interactions when an official face – to – face appointment occurs. When meeting with faculty, be prepared. If written work needs to be discussed, bring an additional copy for your professor.
**E-mail should be polite, and direct.** Use the subject line as it is intended so the professor has context and the email is searchable in their inbox. For example - if the e-mail concerns a course, include the course number and class number in the subject line. Begin the e-mail by addressing the professor by name, and close with your own full name. The body of the email should use full sentences and correct punctuation, capitalization, and grammar. Get to the point quickly and concisely. Offer to meet during office hours if further clarification is needed and do not engage in email trains.

**Academic Advising**

The SPEA Undergraduate Programs Office (UPO) is a valuable tool for honors students, and certain honors program requirements need approval by an advisor. Students must be in consultation with an advisor for thesis planning and for approval of the [Honors Thesis Contract](#). An advisor must approve honors credit for an undesignated SPEA honors course with an [Honors Credit Authorization Form](#). *Meeting regularly with an advisor is recommended.*
Students should periodically review their Academic Advisement Report (AAR), particularly prior to any advising meeting. To access the AAR, log on to One.IU, and go to the Student Center. Under Academics, click My Academics & Grades. Then click View My Advisement Report.

For the first advising meeting, an honors student should request a one-hour appointment. Call the UPO at 812-855-0635 to schedule an appointment. If timely graduation allows, students are encouraged to complete only one honors course per semester, and to limit registered credit hours to 12 during the thesis semester.

Participation in the SPEA Honors Program is entirely voluntary, and students are expected to take an active role in ensuring student success. (Student success = 3.500 in both SPEA and cumulative GPAs.) Regular consultation with an advisor and self-monitoring through the Academic Advisement Report are recommended. SPEA’s advisors can partner with students to plan a course of study that incorporates immediate and future goals.

Opportunities & Benefits

• Accelerated Master’s Program
SPEA’s Accelerated Master’s Program (AMP) allows high achieving students to complete both their undergraduate and master’s degrees in an accelerated timeframe of five years. The AMP is a competitive program for outstanding SPEA students with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.500. Students may apply to the Master of Public Affairs (MPA) or the Master of Science in Environmental Science (MSES) by March 01 in their junior year. Honors students receive provisional admission. More information can be found on SPEA’s website. Please contact the Undergraduate Advising Office with questions or to plan for application.

**SPEA Honors - Vietnam**
Is a three-week summer program that awards three hours of honors credit. Undergraduate students from Vietnam National University join SPEA students in exploring Vietnam’s urban and natural environmental conditions in the age of globalization, spending time in both Hanoi and rural Northwest Vietnam. Honors students are provisionally admitted if they are of junior standing and have completed one SPEA course at an honors level. More information can be found on SPEA’s website. Please contact the Undergraduate Advising Office with questions or to plan for application.

**SPEA offers a number of study abroad programs** that offer honors students the possibility of honors credit. Honors students interested in including an international
component to their educational experience should contact SPEA Overseas Education Programs and speak to an advisor as early as possible in their degree program.

- **Washington Leadership Program (WLP)**
  Honors applicants are not required to submit letters of recommendation, and they will automatically qualify for a screening interview with the Selection Committee. To qualify for this special arrangement, SHP students must have completed a minimum of two SPEA course at an honors level and be of junior standing.

- **Students can reserve a graduate study carrel** in Wells Library at no cost. Read the Guidelines prior to using the Carrel Request Form. Students will need to secure sponsorship from an advisor.

- Students are eligible for **programming, services, and funding** opportunities provided by Hutton Honors College.

- A list of **university-wide resources** may be found at Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity

**In Conclusion:**
The SPEA Undergraduate Program & Advising Office hopes this orientation has been useful and informative! Never hesitate to contact the office or to schedule an appointment with our advisors for more information and assistance. Best of luck, future SPEA Honors alumni!