



**USC Aiken**  
**Honors Program Handbook**  
**2021-2022**

**USC Aiken Honors Program**

Dr. Michelle Vieyra, Director

## **Mission Statement**

Established in 1991 and expanded in 2005, USC Aiken's Honors Program offers academically talented, highly motivated students opportunities for enriched learning experiences both in and outside the classroom. Honors students participate in a unique learning community that enjoys small classes and independent study under the direction of USC Aiken's best teacher-scholars, in a program that cultivates critical thinking, analysis and creative expression. The Honors Program offers students experiences that are interdisciplinary in nature and involve active, engaged learning culminating in a capstone experience.

## **Honors Steering Committee**

Professor Natalia Bowdoin, Library  
Dr. Jeremy Culler, Department of Visual and Performing Arts  
Dr. Andrew Geyer, Department of English  
Dr. Gerard Rowe, Department of Chemistry and Physics  
Professor Mary Gaffney, School of Nursing  
Dr. Sanela Porca, School of Business Administration  
Dr. Tom Reid, Department of Mathematical Sciences  
Dr. Windy Schweder, School of Education  
Dr. Michelle Petrie, Department of Sociology

## **Honors Ambassadors**

Samuel Boyd (Computer Science and Political Science)  
Hunter Daniels (Creative Writing)  
Paige Hicks (Communication)  
Noelle Kriegel (English)  
Gabby Nagorite (Biology)  
Faith Oladejo (Chemistry)  
Eva Slagle (Communication)  
Wilson Steinmeyer (Political Science and Sociology)  
Chloe Towne (Education)

## Honors Program Requirements

To graduate from the USC Aiken Honors program, a student must earn 24-29 hours of Honors Program credits in the following categories:

- **HONS 101 Interdisciplinary Inquiry (3 credit hours): Humanities**  
*The theme of the introductory Honors course, taught by some of our best professors at USCA, varies by year. This course is by special permission only. Honors students will be able to sign up for this class with SSC once permission is given. This course counts as 3 of the 9 credit hours required for the Humanities General Education requirement.*
- **HONS 201 Honors Colloquia (1 credit hour each)**  
*Three one-hour Honors short courses are required. These short courses are restricted to Honors student participation, and colloquia topics vary each semester. Typically, six colloquia are offered each academic year. Honors students will be able to sign up for these colloquia through SSC once special permission has been given.*
- **Five Honors-Designated “Enriched” Courses**
  - Two honors-designated general education/elective courses are required (6-8 credit hours)  
*Honors students must select two General Education courses that will be Honors enhanced. **Students must discuss their enhanced course preferences with the Honors Director BEFORE speaking with professors of these courses.** The Honors Program will enroll students in an Honors section of these courses after arranging the enhancement with the professor of record.*
  - Two honors-designated courses are required in the student’s major field (6-8 credit hours)  
*Honors students must select two courses in their major field to be Honors enhanced. Once again, **students must communicate their preferences to the Honors Program Director, who will arrange the enhancement with the professor of record and enroll the student in an Honors section of that course.** One honors-designated course (3-4 credit hours) will be the student’s choice. Each Honors student can choose to do his or her fifth enrichment in his or her major or in a general education/elective course. *Students who do not submit a request for an enrichment and receive approval by the deadline established by the Honors Program Director may not receive honors credit for the class.**
- **Capstone Experience/Project (3 credit hours)**
  - The Capstone Experience will be completed in the student’s senior year. All Capstones will be completed under the supervision of a faculty member selected by the student. Capstones will consist of one of the following: 1) a semester-long service learning project/course; 2) a scholarly project which involves research, data analysis, and communication of the results of the research; 3) a creative project which involves an approved medium, and communication of the resulting artwork. All Honors students will be expected to present the results of their projects to their peers and to faculty.
  - *Students will submit a “Capstone Intent Form” notifying the Honors Director of their intent to complete the Capstone project the following academic year. Typically, this form will be completed and submitted in the second semester of the junior year. In the semester prior to the completion of the Capstone, Honors students must submit a “Capstone Proposal Form” that will be reviewed by the Honors Steering Committee (HSC). This form will provide a complete description of the proposed project for approval by the HSC by **mid-semester** of the semester **before** the student will conduct the project.*
  - If an Honors student’s major already requires a capstone project, that experience may be enhanced and accepted as the Honors capstone project as well.
  - Honors students will be expected to present the results of their projects to their peers and to the Honors Steering Committee members at the annual Scholar Showcase in April of each year. December graduates will present their work at a special presentation ceremony that will be held prior to the end of the fall semester.

**All courses applied to honors credit must be passed with a grade of “B” or better, otherwise no Honors credit will be given. Further, should a student earn a “C” or lower on the enrichment project in an Honors enriched course, the student will not receive Honors credit for that course.**

### **Honors Students Receive....**

- Unique learning experiences exclusive to Honors students
- One-on-one classroom experiences with USC Aiken faculty
- Close fellowship and study opportunities with USC Aiken’s best students
- Undergraduate research opportunities
- Potential to receive an Honors scholarship
- Access to a private Honors lounge (H&SS 110 with computers, coffee, and free printing!)
- Priority Registration (You will sign up for classes first!)
- Honors Housing
- Special ceremony each year recognizing Honors graduates
- Honors graduate designation on transcript
- Competitive edge when seeking employment or acceptance into graduate/professional schools

### **To Remain in Good Standing....**

- Students accepted into the Honors Program must enroll in HONS 101 during the first year that they are part of the program.
- Honors students **MUST** take at least 3 credit hours of Honors coursework per year to remain in the program.
- Honors students must maintain a USC Aiken cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher during the first two semesters in the program, a 3.1 or higher the third and fourth semesters, a 3.2 or higher the fifth and sixth semesters, and a 3.3 or higher the seventh and eighth semesters.
- Students who do not meet the grade requirements will be placed on Honors Program probationary status for one semester and will be dismissed from the program if standards have not been met by the end of the following semester.
- Students may take Honors courses or Honors enhanced courses during the semester they are on probation. Students may participate in Honors program graduation activities if they are on probation during their last semester, but all students must meet the Honors program requirements in order to graduate from the program. Honors Program completion is on the final transcript for students who successfully meet all of the requirements.
- The Honors Program has carefully selected students that represent the best and brightest of USC Aiken. We expect that our students not only excel in the classroom, but also represent model student behavior by showing personal responsibility in all of their actions throughout their time in the Honors Program. If an Honors student is in violation of the USC Aiken Academic or

Non-Academic Code of Conduct, the Honors Steering Committee will consider sanctions/disciplinary actions and/or dismissal from the Honors Program. Any decisions made by the HSC are separate from any sanctions/disciplinary actions administered by the university. It is a privilege to be in the Honors Program; therefore, the Honors Steering Committee has the right, with approval from the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, to decide on disciplinary sanctions/penalties when instances occur that jeopardize the standards of the Honors Program and/or its resources.

### **Important Dates to Remember (AY 2021-2022)**

- **August 18: Honors Orientation Meeting (Pacer Commons 02B, 3:30-6:00)**
- August 19: CLASSES BEGIN
- September 6: Labor Day, NO CLASSES
- September 8: Last day to submit Writing Proficiency Portfolio
- **September 10: Last day to request an Honors enrichment**
- **November 23: Capstone Presentations for December 2020 graduates**
- November 24-27: Thanksgiving Holidays, NO CLASSES
- December 3: Last day of class
- December 6-10: Final Exams
- December 9: Convocation
- January 10: CLASSES BEGIN
- January 18: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday, NO CLASSES
- January 26: Last day to submit Proficiency Portfolio in Writing
- **February 4: Last day to request an Honors enrichment**
- March 8-12: Spring Break, NO CLASSES
- April 25: CLASSES END (Capstone Intent Forms due)
- TBD: Academic Awards Ceremony
- TBD: Scholar Showcase
- April 27-May 3: Final Exams (excluding weekend)
- May 4: May Commencement

## **AY 2021-2022 Honors Courses**

**Fall 2021**

**HONS 101.001** “Hamilton: An American Musical Through History” taught by History Professor Sarah King

Course Overview: This course will explore the multiple historical contexts critical to understanding Hamilton: An American Musical. It will assess Hamilton’s representations of early American history, its reputation as a groundbreaking Broadway musical, and its relationship to issues that have animated the United States in the early twenty-first century. This course grapples with Hamilton’s complex histories, which include not only the American Revolution and its relationship to race and slavery, but also Hamilton’s relationship to the Broadway musical, hip hop, and debates over race and immigration in the early twenty-first century. It encourages students to develop critical reading and thinking skills as they practice not only thinking historically, but critically assessing different forms of media. Students will navigate Hamilton using approaches from a range of disciplines, including history, media studies, and film studies.

**HONS 201.00a** “Introduction to Falun Dafa Meditation and Cultivation” taught by Business Administration Professor Frank Xie

Course Overview: This honors course covers the basic concept, culture, and practice of cultivation and meditation in the East. The emphasis is to introduce Falun Dafa (aka Falun Gong), an ancient meditation and cultivation practice originated from mainland China. The students will study the fundamental principles of Truthfulness, Compassion, and Tolerance of Falun Dafa meditation, the culture of meditation and self-improvement, and will learn systematically all five (5) sets of exercises including sitting meditation during the classes. The students will experience first-hand the health benefits of meditation and ways to improve attentiveness and moral character. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to understand the culture of cultivation and meditation in Asia; the teachings of Falun Dafa by Master Li Hongzhi; the health benefits and morality enhancement of practicing in Falun Dafa; and why Falun Dafa persecuted by the Communist regime in China.

**HONS 201.00b** “Disease, History and Politics” taught by Biology Professor Michelle Vieyra.

Course Overview: This course will be organized around particular diseases that have played a significant role in shaping human or American history or that demonstrate how current political viewpoints can shape the progression of epidemics/ pandemics. Course meetings will feature a particular disease(s) and will include an overview of the political and social period of the time, progression and investigation of the disease, historical figures important in the identification or eradication of the disease, how the disease changed the particular population it occurred in and how these changes had a wider effect on history. Each disease will be investigated through a combination of lectures and/ or documentaries.

## Spring 2022

**HONS 201.00a** “The Phenomenon of Spanish Soccer Films” taught by Spanish Professor Timothy Ashton

Course Overview: This course addresses different aspects of Spanish soccer films including: the difficulties the genre of soccer films have had in being respected by the intellectual classes; the techniques filmmakers have incorporated to make soccer films accepted and appreciated by the masses and the intellectual classes; and the sociopolitical background which underscore each of the films that will be watched. Additionally, this course will help students gain a broader understanding of Spain and the cultural differences of the Spanish-speaking world. The class illuminates political differences, and different belief systems, which are expressed through the medium of Spanish soccer films. Students will have a better understanding of soccer and cinema as two of World’s most powerful and fastest-growing cultural phenomena of the past 100 years. Students will understand that soccer and cinema are two of the modern world’s most powerful vehicles of globalization.

**HONS 201.00b** “Displacement and the Meaning of Home: Interdisciplinary Perspectives” taught by Library and Information Sciences Professor Natalia Bowdoin

Course Overview: This course will approach the topic of human displacement from a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives. Readings, films, and discussions will include perspectives from anthropology, political science, history, sociology, media studies, information science, theology, philosophy, and literature. We will examine displacement as a global phenomenon and seek to understand the reasons for the increase in refugees and displaced people in the world today. Students will also reflect on their own personal understandings and interpretations of home and belonging and will have the opportunity to hear from individuals and organizations who assist refugees and displaced persons as well as from individuals who have been through displacement experiences themselves. For the final project, students will have an opportunity to explore ways in which the topic of human displacement relates to their own field of academic or professional interest. By the end of the course, students will be able to define and explain the different legal meanings and immigration status of the following categories of individuals: refugees, resettled refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, trafficked persons, stateless persons, and economic migrants. Students will be able to utilize a variety of disciplinary insights to discuss some of the causes of displacement and the experiences of the displaced. Students will be able to discuss issues concerning displaced persons in relation to their own disciplinary major(s). Students will critically and creatively reflect on their own experiences and perceptions of home, belonging, and safety.

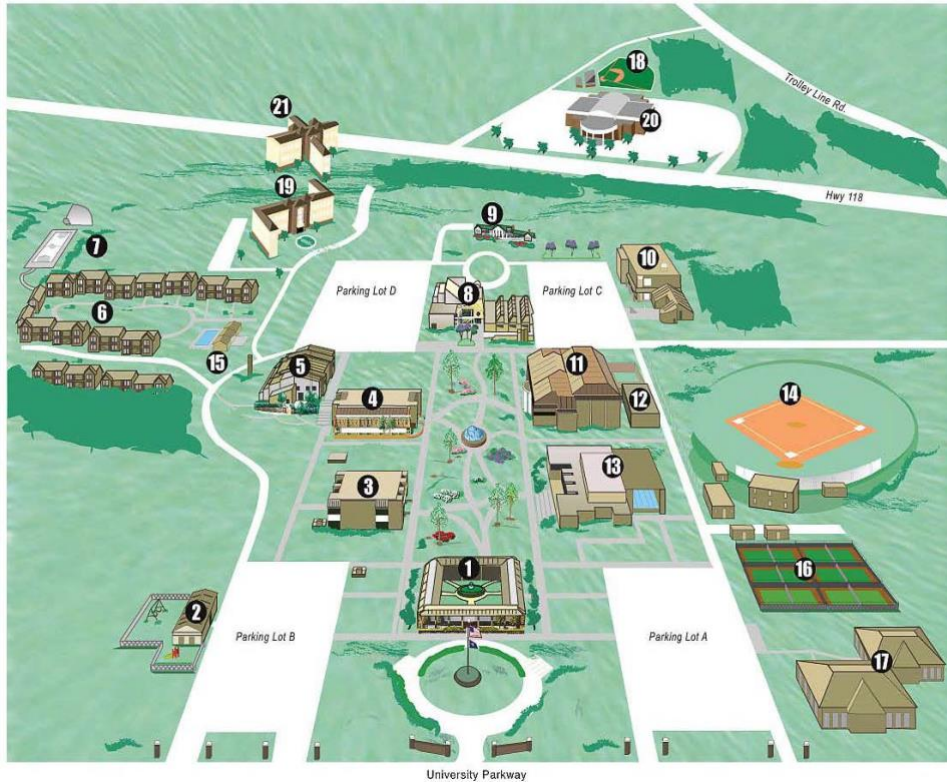
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1. Robert E. Penland Administration Building
2. USC Aiken Children's Center
3. Gregg-Graniteville Library
4. Humanities/Social Sciences Building
5. Science Building
6. Pacer Downs Student Housing
7. Pacer Park Field
8. The Etherredge Center for Fine and Performing Arts
9. Pickens- Salley House
10. Ruth Patrick Science Education Center
11. Business and Education Building/Wellness Center
12. Supply and Maintenance Building
13. Student Activities Center/Natatorium
14. Baseball Field
15. University Police Offices
16. Tennis Courts
17. Alan B. Miller Nursing Building
18. Roberto Hernandez Baseball Stadium
19. Pacer Commons Student Housing
20. Convocation Center
21. Pacer Crossing