

Gipson Honors Program

The Gipson Honors Program serves outstanding individuals who have demonstrated broad intellectual curiosity and the potential for high academic achievement. The Gipson Honors Program offers selected students guided opportunities for leadership development, academic growth, and professional preparation. Students in the Honors Program participate in rich programming and a close-knit community. Initial admission to the Honors Program is by invitation only; students then apply for re-admission annually.

Benefits and Expectations of the Gipson Honors Program in the First Year:

First-Year Seminar for Honors Students

All first-year Honors students are enrolled together in this intimate seminar designed for this particular group of motivated learners. This lively seminar features rigorous analysis and dialogue intended to prepare students as academic leaders. Also through this seminar, Honors students begin forming the close-knit community that will sustain and nourish them during their college careers. Typically, this seminar is taught by the director of the Honors Program.

Mentoring

Each first-year Honors student is assigned a student mentor with shared academic or personal interests. Mentors are advanced Honors students who help guide the new student through the transition to college.

Programming

The Honors Program involves special programming throughout the year. During the fall term, the Honors students gather to meet the incoming (first-year) Honors students and to share their recent research, internship, or study abroad experiences. A few times throughout the year, members of the Honors Program gather together socially—whether to mark finals week, bring in the holiday season, or celebrate graduating seniors. These gatherings help ensure community within the program. All Honors students are expected to attend.

Program Director Advising

The Program director is a faculty member who is dedicated to the Gipson Honors students throughout their tenure in the Honors Program. The director serves as an academic advisor and provides individualized guidance regarding academic, professional, and personal pursuits, ensuring access to advanced level courses and research opportunities. Even once the student has a major advisor, the Program director continues in this supportive role.

Gipson Honors Colloquium

At least twice during their four years, Honors students register for the 1-credit Honors Colloquium (HON 200), which meets during Spring Term. Here, advanced Honors students facilitate discussions amongst the group concerning research, topics, or texts integral to their academic work. Occasionally the Colloquium features specially arranged programming,

including conversations with visiting campus dignitaries, research presentations by faculty members, or discussions with distinguished leaders and professionals.

Criteria for Re-admission to the Gipson Honors Program:

Annual re-admission to the Honors Program is based on consideration of the student's academic performance and progress, engagement with the campus and community, and participation in the Honors Program. By April 1 of each academic year, each Honors student submits a brief self-evaluation to the director of the Honors Program, who reviews the self-evaluation for satisfactory progress. The self-evaluation should entail discussions of academic advancement and success, progress toward professional and personal goals, extra-curricular campus and community involvement, and evidence of participation in Honors Program activities. As part of the evaluation process, the director may request a meeting with the student. On or before April 1, Honors students should submit to the Gipson Honors Program director a Word document (as an attachment to an email message) addressing the above topics and including the names of two professors who have agreed to serve as verbal references for the student. No letters of support from professors are necessary. In the unlikely event of an unfavorable review, a student may enter a semester-long "probation" period and undergo review again at the close of the following fall term. In the even more unlikely event that a student leaves the Program but remains at the College, the student remains eligible for merit scholarships (excluding the Heritage Scholarship). (Heritage Scholarship recipients have additional requirements for maintaining their full-tuition scholarship; click [here](#) to read more about those requirements.)

Criteria for Admission to the Gipson Honors Program as a Continuing Student:

We welcome applications from sophomores (defined below) to the Gipson Honors Program. For consideration for admission, students should submit applications electronically by 5PM on November 1. We welcome applications from true sophomores: students who have completed one year of study at the College, are now in their second year, have completed at least 30 college credits to date, and intend to graduate after a total of four years of study at the College. Students must meet all of these criteria to be eligible for consideration; others are ineligible to apply.

All application materials (including letters of recommendation) are due by email attachment by 5PM on November 1 and should be submitted to the Gipson Honors Program director, whom you may contact with questions. Electronic applications should consist of an unofficial transcript (pdf available through Self-Service), a c.v. or resume (in Word or pdf), the names of two College of Idaho professors who will submit confidential letters of recommendation directly to the Gipson Honors Program director, and an essay of 500 words explaining the particular achievements, experiences, and ambitions that qualify the student to be considered for "honors" status (in Word or pdf). Students should also arrange for the confidential letters of recommendation (from two current College of Idaho professors) to be sent electronically directly to the Gipson Honors Program director. Please allow professors at least three weeks to submit their letters; it is up to the applicant to ensure that they have this proper notice. To graduate with honors, admitted sophomores must complete HON 200 at least twice during their four years at The College of Idaho, regularly attend Honors Program events, and qualify for re-admission to the Honors Program in the junior year. Admitted sophomores are eligible for one-time venture funding of \$2500.

Benefits and Expectations of the Gipson Honors Program in the Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Years:

Gipson Honors Colloquium

At least twice during their four years, Honors students register for the 1-credit Honors Colloquium (HON 200), which meets during Spring Term. Here, advanced Honors students facilitate discussions amongst the group concerning research, topics, or texts integral to their academic work. Occasionally the Colloquium features specially arranged programming, including conversations with visiting campus dignitaries, research presentations by faculty members, or discussions with distinguished leaders and professionals.

Gipson Honors Fund

Honors students at the sophomore level and beyond are invited to apply to this fund, which is intended to facilitate students' personal and professional development. Funds may be used to undertake a creative project, to travel to research sites, as a stipend for an unpaid internship, for travel required by a research experience or an internship, to attend an academic conference, or toward a study abroad venture. Gipson Honors students receive one award of up to \$2500 while they are students in the Honors Program. (Recipients of the Heritage Scholarship may apply for up to \$3500.) Honors students are expected to use this award; the Honors Program director can assist with generating ideas toward the use of the fund.

Mentoring

Honors students at the sophomore year and beyond mentor first-year Honors students. Mentors help guide the new student through the transition to college.

Program Director Support

The Program director is a faculty member who is dedicated to the Gipson Honors students throughout their tenure in the Honors Program. The director serves as an academic advisor and provides guidance regarding academic, professional, and personal pursuits. The director also provides individual, guided assistance with portfolio preparation in the junior/senior years, including personalized preparation for graduate or professional school applications and for post-graduate fellowships such as the Rhodes, Marshall, Gates Cambridge, and National Science Foundation awards.

Upon Completion of the Gipson Honors Program:

For those students who graduate from the College of Idaho as members of the Gipson Honors Program, the College transcript indicates successful completion of the Honors curriculum and notes that the student was a member of the Gipson Honors Program.

The Gipson Honors Program is named for a former College of Idaho professor, Lawrence Henry Gipson, who was both Idaho's first Rhodes Scholar and a member of the very first class of Rhodes Scholars at Oxford University. He went on to be awarded a Pulitzer Prize in history. Today, the Gipson family continues its tradition of distinguished leadership. The Gipson Honors Program seeks to continue this legacy of academic success, community leadership, and professional excellence.