

THE DUNS SCOTUS FELLOWS AND SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Duns Scotus Fellows and Scholars Program is named after a great Franciscan scholar in order to acknowledge that USF has benefited from and is continually committed to the Franciscan intellectual tradition. The program is designed to create a learning community of motivated students who are challenged to excel academically. Participants are expected to develop a deeper appreciation of Franciscanism and integrate it into their experience; develop stronger skills for graduate study or careers, deepen their awareness of the interconnectedness of knowledge, appreciate the variety and richness of intellectual expression, appreciate encounters with diverse populations and learning styles, sharpen thinking and communication skills through intensive writing, increase their ability to do significant original research, and develop a commitment to academic excellence with the goal of developing wisdom with humility in order to serve humankind.

Program Structure and Curriculum

In order to facilitate as much student participation as possible, there are multiple points of entry into the program. There are two honors tracks: one for **Duns Scotus Fellows** and one for **Duns Scotus Scholars**. The **Duns Scotus Fellows** track is designed for students who attend the university for almost all of their college career (or for those who transfer in with previous honors experience) and wish to be part of the honors program during the entire time. It is, therefore, the more extensive of the two honors tracks offered. The curriculum for Fellows fulfills requirements in the university's general education as well as requirements in the fellow's chosen major. The **Duns Scotus Scholars** track is designed for transfer students, or students who do not qualify initially or who decide not to participate right away, or for those who are most interested in honors in their major. The curriculum for Scholars fulfills requirements only in the scholar's chosen major.

Duns Scotus Fellows

Student Qualifications/Admissions Procedure

Entering freshmen may apply for the program from the time they are admitted until a month before classes begin. To qualify for the program upon entrance to the university as a freshman, a student should meet the following criteria:

- Be eligible for a Trustee or Presidential scholarship (contact the Admissions office for criteria for these awards)
- Be interviewed by a representative of the program.

Continuing students who did not initially qualify for the honors program upon entrance to USF, or who did not choose to be involved initially, will be invited to participate in the program after their first semester, provided that they have at least a 3.25 GPA (or are in the upper 10% of the class in their respective college) and are recommended by a faculty member. The essay and interview will be required. Continuing students will be required to take the same number of honors hours as students who entered as first semester freshmen, but substitutions (such as different honors general education courses or contracts) may be made for specific requirements (such as Foundations I or Foundations II) if they have already taken a non-honors section of the course. Students will not be able to apply for the Fellows program once they have completed

enough hours for sophomore standing (30). That is, students may apply throughout their freshman year, but not after.

Fellows Program Overview

Curriculum: The Fellows curriculum consists of twenty-five hours of honors course work. This is comprised of a combination of separate honors course work and contracts to do honors work in non-honors courses. During the first year and a half, students in the program will take an honors section of Foundations I, II and Speech Communication. After this, students will need to complete one course (3 credit hours or more) of general education, either in a separate honors course or with a contract, and three upper-level courses (or 9 credit hours or more) in their major discipline. Individual departments set the standards and procedures for their majors in the program. In addition, students are required to participate in three one-hour honors seminars, attend three cultural experiences a year, and complete an honors thesis. The Honors Council sets the guidelines for honors theses, which may be interdisciplinary, but departments set requirements for completion of the thesis.

Suggested Academic Plan for the Honors Program

General/liberal education requirements (16 credit hours):

Fall, freshmen year: Foundations I Honors Section with service learning (4 credit hours)

Spring, freshmen year: Foundations II Honors Section (3 credit hours)

Fall, sophomore year: Speech Communication Honors Section (3 credit hours)

Spring, sophomore year or junior year: at least one general education course, either in an honors section or with an honors contract

During junior and senior year: three one-hour seminars (preferably one a semester), one of which must be the Franciscan Traditions seminar.

Major requirements (9 hours as part of the major plus an honors thesis or project): These hours are assigned by the student's major department, and may be comprised of separate honors courses, contracts, collaborative research projects, etc., as the department determines to be appropriate. They are considered part of the student's major requirements. Students also must complete a research component or project in one of the departmental requirements that fulfills honors criteria, is approved by the Honors Council, and is presented in an honors seminar. There must, in addition, be an honors thesis or capstone project that is approved by the Honors Council and is of sufficient quality to be submitted to a journal or for presentation at a conference.

Seminars: Seminars are designed to allow honors students to explore subjects not covered in standard college courses. These provide a special intellectual dynamic with the professor(s), are interdisciplinary, and have a service-learning component. Seminars are also a forum for students to share their research. Mandatory is the Franciscan Traditions seminar, in which students read and discuss what it means to be Franciscan, and engage in a service project.

Cultural/Social Experiences: The Duns Scotus Program sponsors at least six cultural events a year - three in each semester. At least two of these events are off-campus, and include either local or long distance trips. Fellows are required to attend **at least three events a year**, one of which must be off-campus. If an event is on campus and involves a speaker or performer, students will be given special access (when available). They may, for instance, have opportunities to dine with and/or join the presenter(s) in small group discussions. Fellows' and Scholars' admission to these events will be paid by the Duns Scotus Program.

Service-Learning: Service-learning is integrated into the curriculum as a component of the honors Core classes as well as the seminars. Students are asked to do service in the community and to link their activity to course materials. Discussions are fostered during class time, and students are asked to keep a reflective journal.

International component: International experience is emphasized in the program. Students are encouraged to go on a university-sponsored trip-for-credit (which offers honors contracts) or take a semester studying abroad.

Completion of the Program: In order to remain in good standing in the program, a student must maintain an overall GPA of 3.25. If the GPA falls below 3.25, the student will remain in the program on a probationary status and will have one semester to bring the GPA back up to the required level. If the GPA is not improved after one semester, or if it falls below 3.25 a second time, the student will not be permitted to continue in the program. In order to graduate with honors a student must complete the sequence of courses, seminars, cultural experiences, and service learning as outlined above.

Duns Scotus Scholars

Student Qualifications/Admissions Procedure

Continuing students may apply for the Scholars program from the time they are second-semester sophomores until they are seniors. To be accepted into the program, students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher; have a recommendation from a faculty member; write an essay, and be interviewed.

Transfer students may apply upon acceptance to the university. They must demonstrate a cumulative GPA of 3.25 in their previous institution(s), write an essay, and be interviewed.

Scholars Program Overview

Curriculum: The Scholars curriculum focuses on the student's major program. It includes everything that the Fellows curriculum does **except** for the General/liberal education requirements (see above).

Other requirements: The Scholars program is identical to the Fellows program in Seminars, Cultural/Social Experiences, Service-learning, International Component, and Completion of the Program. See above for that information.

Rewards and incentives for participating in the Program

All Duns Scotus Fellows and Scholars are awarded a scholarship each semester toward tuition, in addition to the Trustee or any other scholarship they may receive from the university. Student involvement in cultural activities, research trips, and conferences are subsidized. Upon completion of the program, the student receives a **special honors designation on the final transcript and will be presented with an honor cord at graduation.**