

CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN HONORS COLLEGE

Mission Statement

The Honors College is a community of faculty and students deeply committed to ordering life and learning around the love of God. We exist to advance the great Christian intellectual tradition and its aim of glorifying the Triune God in all of life.

We do this by reading great books theologically, seeking God's help in illuminating their significance and implications for our lives by the light of Scripture (Psalm 119.130). We believe that this time-honored approach uncovers profound truths about reality and helps us understand and respond to the complex world in which we live.

Because Jesus the Messiah is the One in whom all things hold together (Col 1.18), we pursue truth wherever it leads. Alongside Augustine we confess that faith is essential to true understanding (*crede ut intellegas*), not in conflict with it. While common grace ensures that truth can be discovered by the unbelieving world, we affirm that all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are ultimately hidden in Christ (Col 2.3). Christians are therefore especially called to robust, humble, inquisitive intellectual discovery and eager, patient, winsome engagement with the world.

As a community, our mission is to grow in intellectual and relational wisdom, that we might be better prepared to live meaningful lives of service and leadership in an increasingly complex world.

Outcomes

Our aim is to shape students with the ability to:

- Examine the insights of the great works of history under the authority of God's inerrant Word.
- Demonstrate the responsibility, discipline, and capacity to master new fields of knowledge through self-directed study.
- Cultivate tempered, genuine, and constructive discourse marked by intellectual clarity, humility, and patience.
- Engage complex cultural challenges with historical understanding, biblical wisdom, and Christian virtue.
- Exemplify godly, thoughtful, humble, and relational leadership in the home, church, community, and world.
- Demonstrate the truthfulness, coherence, and explanatory value of the Christian understanding of the world.
- Model a life of mature discipleship marked by a growing love for the triune God, his Word, and all nations.

Core Curriculum Courses Fulfilled by Honors Courses

The Great Books & Ideas (GBI) program satisfies 36 of the 55–57 credits in the University of Northwestern's core curriculum. This approach enables students to earn a secondary major alongside their primary major with minimal (oftentimes, no) additional credit hours.

Core Curriculum Category	Total Core Requirements	Great Books Courses	Remaining Core
Biblical Thinking & Living: Required	14	14	0
Biblical Thinking & Living: Selectives	8	8	0
Leadership & Professionalism	6	4	2
Scientific & Quantitative Reasoning	8	2	6
Communication	3	0	3
Critical Thinking & Information Literacy	4	0	4
Cultural & Global Engagement	6	4	2
Creative Expression	4	4	0
TOTAL CREDITS	53	36	17

Great Books & Ideas (Secondary Major)

Bachelor of Arts

This is not a stand-alone major and exists only and explicitly as a secondary major for current students. The Great Books & Ideas program is a three-year, cohort-based, honors-level, 40-credit secondary major. This model enables students to engage in a robust, discussion-oriented, great books-based liberal arts experience that complements their primary academic major.

The program is offered as a sequence of six required courses—one six credit course each semester over three years—plus a four-credit topics honors experience course that will take place in New England, Oxford, Rome, or another setting of historical or natural significance. This summer course can be taken after the first year and may be taken more than once.

Courses in the program are chronological and focused on the reading and discussion of texts in multiple genres. Students meet twice each week for seminar. Seminar is elenctic / Socratic discussion which prioritizes student discussion and is facilitated by faculty tutors.

Courses prioritize careful reading outside the classroom (notetaking) and thorough, meaningful, productive discussion during seminar. Writing requirements support analysis and integration of learning.

Great Books & Ideas Courses 40 cr

Year One 12 cr

Fall

HNR1510 The Ancient World and the Hebrew Scriptures 6

Spring

HNR1520 The Classical World and Early Christianity 6

Year Two 12 cr

Fall

HNR2530 The Medieval World 6

Spring

HNR2540 Renaissance, Reformation, and the Rise of Modern Thought 6

Year Three 12 cr

Fall

HNR3550 The Enlightenment, American Founding, and Christian Responses 6

Spring

HNR3560 Modernity, American Identity, and Contemporary Christian Thought 6

Any Summer After The First Course 4 cr

HNR2550 Topics Honors Experience 4