

The ACES Honors Almanac Academic Year 2023-2024



A Reference Guide to the ACES James Scholar Honors Program

Introductory Overview

Since 1959, the ACES James Scholar Honors Program has been empowering exceptional undergraduates to enhance their academic experiences through a broad spectrum of activities and experiences. Participation is open to all qualified students enrolled in any Bachelor of Science degree program within the College of ACES.

James Scholars can take maximum advantage of the College's distinguished teaching talent and research facilities to expand their horizons and gain a competitive edge. The Departmental Honors Advisors provide guidance to James Scholars as they work toward achieving their professional goals within the Honors Program.

Benefits of the ACES James Scholar Honors Program

- **Priority registration** (starting in November for first-year students) allows access to high-demand courses and sections.
- **Individualized faculty advising** in preparation of the Honors Completion Plan (HCP) and during the development and implementation of the Capstone Experiential Learning Project (CELP).
- The opportunity to **conduct individual research or a scholarly project** in your specific area of interest and have your findings presented as a poster display and/or a journal article.
- **Scholarships and grants** to assist with tuition and funding expenses for studying abroad and the Capstone Experiential Learning Project.
- Graduation as an **ACES James Scholar** with a certificate of achievement, a bronze medallion, and the **University James Scholar** designation listed on your transcript.
- **Excellent preparation** for admission to graduate programs and professional schools (e.g., dentistry, law, medicine, optometry, and veterinary medicine).

Outline of the ACES James Scholar Honors Program: A Year-by-Year Synopsis

The following outline summarizes the "Milestones of Achievement" that all ACES James Scholars are expected to complete during each of the four years of the Honors Program. Please note that completing a total of four honors activities is required prior to graduation, with the understanding that at least one honors activity needs to be completed during each academic year. Any of the following options can be used to fulfill this requirement:

- A regular course with an Honors Credit Learning Agreement (HCLA)
- An honors section of any course
- A Campus Honors Program (CHP) course

- **ACES 396: Honors Study Abroad Retrospective**
- Another approved activity that involves effort beyond normal academic requirements (such as earning an Illinois Leadership Certificate and/or an Undergraduate Research Certificate)

The First Year

Designation as an ACES James Scholar is offered to incoming first-year students who rank in the top 10%-15% of their entering class. First-year students who do not accept or qualify upon admission may apply for ACES James Scholar status during the spring semester (until the designated deadline in **mid-February**) if they have achieved an overall GPA ≥ 3.50 after their first semester.

First-Year Milestones of Achievement:

- ✓ Make satisfactory progress toward completion of the B.S. degree, earning a total of at least 30 credit hours by the end of the academic year, with an overall GPA ≥ 3.40 . (Scholars majoring in Agricultural and Biological Engineering will need to maintain an overall GPA ≥ 3.50 .)
- ✓ Complete at least one honors activity during the academic year (please see above for options).

The Sophomore Year

Applications from newly admitted and continuing ACES students (with an overall GPA ≥ 3.50) are accepted during the fall semester (until the designated deadline in **mid-September**) and during the spring semester (until the designated deadline in **mid-February**).

Sophomore Milestones of Achievement:

- ✓ Make satisfactory progress toward completion of the B.S. degree, earning a total of at least 60 credit hours by the end of the academic year, with an overall GPA ≥ 3.40 . (Scholars majoring in Agricultural and Biological Engineering will need to maintain an overall GPA ≥ 3.50 .)
- ✓ Complete at least one honors activity during the academic year (please see above for options).
- ✓ Scholars who are planning to be off-campus (e.g., for study abroad or an internship) during the fall semester of their junior year should prepare and submit an Honors Completion Plan (HCP) to aces-jshp@illinois.edu before the designated deadline in **mid-April** of their sophomore year. The HCP has curricular rigor that exceeds the minimum requirements of their major and includes a Capstone Experiential Learning Project.

The Junior Year

Newly admitted and continuing ACES students may apply for admission to the ACES James Scholar Honors Program (with an overall GPA ≥ 3.50) before the designed deadline in **mid-September** of their junior year.

Junior Milestones of Achievement:

- ✓ Scholars should prepare and submit an Honors Completion Plan (HCP) to aces-jshp@illinois.edu before the designated deadline in **mid-November** of their junior year. The HCP has curricular rigor that exceeds the minimum requirements of their major and includes a Capstone Experiential Learning Project.
- ✓ Make satisfactory progress toward completion of the B.S. degree: earning a total of at least 90 credit hours by the end of the academic year, with an overall GPA ≥ 3.40 .
- ✓ Complete at least one honors activity during the academic year (please see above for options).
- ✓ Start fulfilling the components of the HCP and begin work on the Capstone Experiential Learning Project.

The Senior Year

Participation is open to continuing ACES students maintaining an overall GPA ≥ 3.40 .

Senior Milestones of Achievement:

- ✓ Complete the B.S. degree by the end of the academic year, with an overall GPA ≥ 3.40 .

- ✓ Complete at least one honors activity during the academic year (please see above for options).
- ✓ Finish fulfilling **all** the components of the HCP and complete work on the Capstone Experiential Learning Project.
- ✓ Present a poster display of the Capstone Experiential Learning Project results at the Undergraduate Research Symposium, the ACES Undergraduate Research Day, a departmental meeting/seminar, or a professional/scientific conference.

The Capstone Experiential Learning Project

The Capstone Experiential Learning Project will acquaint you with the current literature in your discipline, develop your investigative skills and techniques, and prepare you for a professional career in the agricultural, consumer, and environmental sciences. The project is developed and conducted under the guidance of your Faculty Mentor. **Interdisciplinary projects are encouraged.**

Upon completion of the Capstone Experiential Learning Project, the results are presented as a poster display at the Undergraduate Research Symposium, the ACES Undergraduate Research Day, a departmental meeting/seminar, or a professional/scientific conference. The Faculty Mentor will also need to certify in writing that the project has been completed successfully.

Departmental Honors Advisors

Each academic unit in the College of ACES has a designated Departmental Honors Advisor who provides advice and assistance to James Scholars enrolled in their particular unit. The Honors Advisor's signature of approval is required on all Honors Completion Plans originating from within their academic unit. In addition, the Honors Advisor can help scholars find an appropriate Faculty Mentor for their Capstone Experiential Learning Project. Honors Advisors may also host meetings and events for James Scholars enrolled in their department and address any questions or problems that scholars might encounter. Here is a directory of this year's Departmental Honors Advisors.

Anne Marie	Boone	ABE Honors Advisor	aboone@illinois.edu
Lisa	Gundersen	ACE Honors Advisor	lcgunder@illinois.edu
Logan	Honegger	ACES Undeclared Honors Advisor	lhonegg2@illinois.edu
Piper	Hodson	NRES Honors Advisor	phodson@illinois.edu
Travis	Johnson	ETMAS Honors Advisor	travisj2@illinois.edu
Yuan-Xiang	Pan	FSHN Honors Advisor	yxpan@illinois.edu
Alicia	Schneider	ANSC Honors Advisor	schneid6@illinois.edu
Patrick	Tranel	CPSC Honors Advisor	tranel@illinois.edu
Kelly	Tu	HDFS Honors Advisor	ktfrantz@illinois.edu

Graduation from the College of ACES with James Scholar Distinction

The Honors Completion Plan (HCP) is a roadmap for successful completion of the ACES James Scholar Honors Program. **The HCP needs to be submitted by all ACES James Scholars via aces-jshp@illinois.edu by the designated deadline in mid-November of the junior year.**

By preparing and signing their HCP, scholars declare their intention to graduate from the College of ACES with James Scholar Distinction. Scholars will need to fulfill **all** the Milestones of Achievement listed on the HCP, along with maintaining an overall GPA ≥ 3.40 , in order to graduate from the College of ACES with James Scholar Distinction. Scholars can modify their HCP, with the approval and signature of their Departmental Honors Advisor, at any time before they graduate. Scholars may resign from the ACES James Scholar Honors Program at any time without academic penalty; their resignation will not be noted on their transcript.

The required Milestones of Achievement are as follows:

1. The Capstone Experiential Learning Project (e.g., a bachelor's thesis, laboratory project, design project, or research internship) is conducted under the guidance of a Faculty Mentor. (Enrollment in a 300-level Undergraduate Research course is optional but highly recommended.) At the conclusion of the project, the Faculty Mentor will certify in writing that the project has been completed successfully.
2. Present a poster display based on item #1 at the Undergraduate Research Symposium (in April), the ACES Undergraduate Research Day (in April), a departmental meeting/seminar, or a professional/scientific conference.
3. Complete four courses with honors credit (i.e., with an **H** following the standard letter grade) before graduation. A grade of **B-** or higher is needed to earn honors credit in any course. **Undergraduate Research courses with honors credit (i.e., 396 or 398) can only be used once to complete this requirement.**
4. Complete four 400-level courses with a standard letter grade of **B-** or higher. These courses may be taken in any department on campus.
5. Complete one 500-level course (or a specially designated 400-level graduate-credit course approved by a Departmental Honors Advisor) with a standard letter grade of **B-** or higher. This course may be taken in any department on campus. **This course cannot be identical with any of the courses taken in fulfillment of item #4.**

Please note that James Scholars' status within the Honors Program will be subject to reevaluation if they do not make satisfactory progress toward fulfilling the Milestones of Achievement listed above. James Scholars may also be discontinued from the Honors Program if they have committed one or more acts of academic misconduct, as defined and explained in the **Student Code** (Article 1, Section 4) at <https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1/part4/1-401/>. Falsifying information on Honors Program documents would also be considered grounds for discontinuation from the Honors Program.

Special Course Offering

The Honors Program offers a special course for ACES James Scholars (and Chancellor's Scholars enrolled in the College of ACES). The course carries automatic honors credit if it is completed with a letter grade of $\geq B-$.

ACES 396: Honors Study Abroad Retrospective

Scholars who will be spending a summer, a semester, or a year overseas are encouraged to confer with their Departmental Honors Advisor before their departure from campus to explore the possibility of earning honors credit for studying abroad through taking **ACES 396** upon their return to campus. This

course, which is overseen by the ACES Study Abroad Director, gives scholars an opportunity to earn one hour of honors credit by undertaking a specific honors assignment that is agreed upon by the ACES Study Abroad Director and the scholar, using a Memorandum of Understanding to define the type and scope of the honors assignment to be undertaken. The honors assignment needs to be completed by the end of the semester immediately following the scholar's return from overseas.

Important Dates and Deadlines: Academic Year 2023-2024

Fall Semester 2023

Friday, September 15, 2023

5:00 PM

- Deadline for qualified sophomores and juniors to apply for ACES James Scholar status in fall 2023.
- Deadline to submit Honors Credit Learning Agreements (HCLAs) for a first half-session (eight-week) course through the web portal at <https://go.aces.illinois.edu/HCLA>.

Friday, October 13, 2023

5:00 PM

- Deadline to submit Honors Credit Learning Agreements (HCLAs) for full-term (sixteen-week) courses through the web portal at <https://go.aces.illinois.edu/HCLA>.

Monday, October 30, 2023

TBA

- ACES James Scholars and Chancellor's Scholars begin priority registration for spring 2024 on Student Self-Service.

Wednesday, November 1, 2023

5:00 PM

- Deadline for qualified ACES students to apply for an ACES Undergraduate Research Scholarship for the spring 2024 semester.

Friday, November 10, 2023

5:00 PM

- Deadline to submit Honors Credit Learning Agreements (HCLAs) for a second half-session (eight-week) course through the web portal at <https://go.aces.illinois.edu/HCLA>.

Friday, November 17, 2023

5:00 PM

- Deadline for juniors to submit their Honors Completion Plans (HCPs) via aces-jshp@illinois.edu.

Spring Semester 2024

Friday, February 9, 2024

5:00 PM

- Deadline for qualified first-year students and sophomores to apply for ACES James Scholar status in spring 2024.
- Deadline to submit Honors Credit Learning Agreements (HCLAs) for a first half-session (eight-week) course through the web portal at <https://go.aces.illinois.edu/HCLA>.

Friday, March 8, 2024
5:00 PM

- Deadline to submit Honors Credit Learning Agreements (HCLAs) for full-term (sixteen-week) courses through the web portal at <https://go.aces.illinois.edu/HCLA>.

Monday, April 1, 2024
TBA

- ACES James Scholars and Chancellor's Scholars begin priority registration for summer and fall 2024 on Student Self-Service.

Friday, April 12, 2024
TBA

- ACES Undergraduate Research Day – special event (details TBA).

Friday, April 12, 2024
5:00 PM

- Deadline to submit Honors Credit Learning Agreements (HCLAs) for second half-session (eight-week) courses through the web portal at <https://go.aces.illinois.edu/HCLA>.

Friday, April 19, 2024
5:00 PM

- Deadline for sophomores who are planning to be off-campus (e.g., for study abroad or an internship) during the fall semester of their junior year to submit their Honors Completion Plans (HCPs) via aces-jshp@illinois.edu.

Thursday, April 25, 2024
TBA

- Undergraduate Research Symposium at the Illini Union.

Wednesday, May 1, 2024
5:00 PM

- Deadline for qualified ACES students to apply for an ACES Undergraduate Research Scholarship for the fall 2024 semester.

Summer Session 2024

Friday, June 21, 2024
5:00 PM

- Deadline to submit Honors Credit Learning Agreements (HCLAs) for twelve-week summer courses through the web portal at <https://go.aces.illinois.edu/HCLA>.

Friday, July 5, 2024
5:00 PM

- Deadline to submit Honors Credit Learning Agreements (HCLAs) for eight-week summer courses through the web portal at <https://go.aces.illinois.edu/HCLA>.

Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The ACES James Scholar Honors Program welcomes **all** academically qualified students to participate in the enhanced educational experiences that it offers. We encourage everyone affiliated with the ACES James Scholar Honors Program to join us in taking the **Inclusive Illinois Pledge**:

1. *As members of the University of Illinois community, we commit to supporting Inclusive Illinois.*
2. *We will encourage the expression of different voices, perspectives, and ideas.*
3. *We will challenge our own beliefs, opinions, and viewpoints.*

4. *We will advocate for an accessible, safe, and respectful environment to enhance the living, learning, and working community at Illinois.*
5. *We will acknowledge and respect the multiple identities represented in each individual.*
6. *Our commitment will be demonstrated by our voice and our conduct.*

For More Information

The ACES James Scholar Honors Program

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<https://publish.illinois.edu/aces-james-scholars>