

Academic Relations Committee Report

In October 2019, the Academic Relations Committee was charged to consider and recommend changes in the requirements to be met by students to qualify for Scholastic Honors at graduation. This special distinction is awarded to students who demonstrate high scholarship in completing a baccalaureate degree. The policy (Op3.04-41) may be found at

https://www.missouristate.edu/policy/Op3_04_41_ScholasticHonors.htm

The proposed changes in the requirements and the rationale are provided below.

Current:

Requirements to be met for students admitted to the University fall 2004 and beyond

1. Completion of 60 undergraduate credit hours at Missouri State, and
2. a Missouri State grade point average of 3.50 or better, and
3. a combined (Missouri State and transfer) grade point average of 3.50 or better.

Honors will then be granted based on the lower grade point average of either Missouri State or combined as follows:

- GPA of 3.50 - 3.74 — Cum Laude
- GPA of 3.75 - 3.89 — Magna Cum Laude
- GPA of 3.90 - 4.00 — Summa Cum Laude

Proposed:

Requirements to be met for students admitted to the University fall 2004 and beyond

1. Completion of **60 30** undergraduate credit hours at Missouri State, and
2. a Missouri State grade point average of 3.50 or better, and
3. a combined (Missouri State and transfer) grade point average of 3.50 or better.

Honors will then be granted based on the lower grade point average of either Missouri State or combined as follows:

- GPA of 3.50 - 3.74 — Cum Laude
- GPA of 3.75 - 3.89 — Magna Cum Laude
- GPA of 3.90 - 4.00 — Summa Cum Laude

Revised:

Requirements to be met for students admitted to the University fall 2004 and beyond

1. Completion of 30 undergraduate credit hours at Missouri State, and
2. a Missouri State grade point average of 3.50 or better, and
3. a combined (Missouri State and transfer) grade point average of 3.50 or better.

Honors will then be granted based on the lower grade point average of either Missouri State or combined as follows:

- GPA of 3.50 - 3.74 — Cum Laude
- GPA of 3.75 - 3.89 — Magna Cum Laude
- GPA of 3.90 - 4.00 — Summa Cum Laude

Rationale for Change:

This charge is being brought forward in consideration of adjusting the scholastic honors policy to reduce the institutional credits requirement from 60 credits to 30 credits. This charge would bring this policy into alignment with the residence requirement found in the General Baccalaureate policy. Currently, some transfer students are eligible to complete the University's Accelerated Honors College program yet are not qualifying for scholastic honors because of the 60 institutional credits requirement. Graduates can also become frustrated that transfer credits are recognized between collaborative programs, through Core 42, and for degree completion but not equally recognized for scholastics honors. The Scholastic Honors policy already has safeguards to ensure the integrity of academic rigor, such as eligibility being based on the lowest of either combined cumulative GPA or MSU cumulative GPA.

Recommendation

The Academic Relations Committee unanimously recommends the revision of scholastic honors policy to reduce the institutional credits requirement from 60 credits to 30 credits.

Currently, we have honor students who are recognized by the honors college but cannot have scholastic honors due to the number of MSU completed hours currently in the policy. In 2018 (spring, summer, and fall), 68 students would have been eligible for honors under the revised/proposed requirements. 26 of them had a higher MSU cumulative GPA than combined (MSU plus transfer), 6 had equal MSU cumulative, and combined GPA and 36 of them had higher combined than MSU cumulative GPA.

The proposed revision is particularly meaningful due to the large number of transfer students and non-traditional students here at MSU. The current policy deprives some students of the honors designation because of completed hours, rather than GPA, simply because they transferred to MSU at a later point in their academic career. The Committee recommends the honors designation to be much more institution neutral.

Faculty Senate Resolution

Whereas, the current Missouri State University Scholastic Honors Policy requires completion of 60 undergraduate credit hours at Missouri State; and

Whereas, some transfer students are eligible to complete the University's Accelerated Honors College program yet are not qualifying for scholastic honors because of the 60 institutional credits requirement; and

Whereas, transfer credits are recognized between collaborative programs, through Core 42, and for degree completion but are not equally recognized for scholastics honors; and

Whereas, the University residency requirement for graduation is 30 undergraduate credit hours at Missouri State; and

Whereas, the Scholastic Honors Policy has other safeguards to ensure the integrity of academic rigor; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate supports a change of the University's Scholastic Honors Policy requirement of credit hours at MSU from 60 to 30 hours of credit.