

ILLINOIS MEDIA JAMES SCHOLAR PROCEDURES/RULES

ACADEMIC YEAR 2022–2023

Students have been made aware of all requirements by nature of their publication. It is each student's responsibility to read and understand all requirements for remaining in the program and should contact their academic advisor with any questions. Regardless of whether the rules are read, a student will be charged with knowledge of them. Citing ignorance of the rules will not be considered sufficient justification for an appeal of being dropped from the program.

BECOMING A JAMES SCHOLAR

STUDENTS ELIGIBLE TO JOIN ARE

- Current College of Media students who have completed less than 75 hours, are included on the spring Dean's List, AND who have at least a 3.50 overall GPA
- On-campus transfer students into the College of Media, who are certified by their previous college as James Scholar
- The top 20% of the college's incoming freshman class. The top 20% is based on a combination of a student's ACT/SAT score (if submitted), high school GPA, application essays, and related involvement. Students are automatically considered for admission upon application to the University; there is no separate application
- Off-campus transfers with at least a 3.75 transfer GPA may request to join the program. Please speak with your academic advisor if you have questions about the process

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT BECOMING ELIGIBLE

- Students who meet the above requirements will be invited to become James Scholar for the upcoming fall semester after summer academic review is complete. There is no self-nomination process
- Qualifying students may enter the program for either the sophomore or junior year but not for the senior year alone
- A student must have a minimum of FOUR semesters (two academic years) remaining to complete their primary degree to be invited to join the program
EXCEPTION: a rising senior that previously completed two years in the James Scholar program before being dismissed and then meets the requirements to rejoin the program for senior year will be invited during the summer review period. **They would then need to make up an Honors activity to account for the missing year in the program. Please see [Graduating with James Scholar Distinction](#) below**
- If invited to become a James Scholar, you must notify the Honors Dean of your acceptance or denial of the offer by the date specified in your notification letter

REMAINING IN GOOD STANDING AS A JAMES SCHOLAR

TO REMAIN IN THE JAMES SCHOLAR PROGRAM, A STUDENT MUST

- Maintain on-campus **semester and cumulative** GPAs of 3.50
- Take a minimum of **12 GRADED credit hours** each fall and spring semester **on the Illinois campus**
 - Illinois online courses taken as part of the traditional fall or spring term count in this total
 - Self-paced online courses such as those offered through NetMath do not count in this total
 - Winter Term and Summer courses do not count toward the 12 graded hours needed each fall and spring
- Complete at least one Honors option/project **each academic year** (see **[Honors or Research Coursework Options](#)**)
 - Note, to graduate with James Scholar distinction from the College of Media, students must complete a minimum of five Honors options by the end of their final fall term at Illinois
 - **Please review this full policy at the end of "[Graduating with James Scholar Distinction](#)"**

JAMES SCHOLAR PROGRAM REVIEW PERIODS

There are two review periods each academic year to ensure that students are meeting requirements for remaining in the program

- End of fall term review period: Students will be reviewed for completing 12 graded credit hours, the 3.5 semester and overall GPA's
 - Those who have not met these requirements will be notified as such and dropped from the program prior to the start of the spring term

- See the “*First-Year Students*” section below for an exception to this rule
 - Summer review period: Students will be reviewed for completing 12 graded credit hours in the spring, the 3.5 semester and overall GPA’s, as well as the completion of at least one Honors project during the academic year
- Students who are dismissed from the program during either review period must sit out from the program for at least one academic year even if they earn a spot on the College’s Spring Dean’s List in the same academic year
 - Students cannot be readmitted into Media’s James Scholar program during the same year that they failed to meet requirements to remain in the program
- **All requirements must be completed in order to continue as a James Scholar for the following academic year and to receive the James Scholar notation on the academic transcript each academic year**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

- College of Media First-Year Freshmen James Scholars will be allowed to earn a minimum GPA of 3.30 in the fall term. However, a student’s overall GPA must reach a minimum of 3.50 by the end of the spring term in order to remain in the James Scholar program for sophomore year
- This exception is for the First-Year Freshman year **ONLY**; a 3.50 term and overall GPA must be maintained in all future semesters

PLEASE NOTE: It is each student’s responsibility to be sure that they are meeting all requirements. Students who choose to take a course Credit/No Credit must be enrolled in 12 graded credit hours at Illinois, NO EXCEPTIONS. Coursework taken at Parkland or another institution does NOT count toward the 12 graded credit hours required toward the semester or overall GPA.

STUDY ABROAD: REMAINING IN THE JAMES SCHOLAR PROGRAM WHILE ABROAD

Students who are studying abroad are exempt from credit hour and GPA requirements during the semester(s) they are abroad. Please note the following

- Students abroad are expected to take the equivalent of full-time enrollment at their host institution
- The Honors project requirement must be completed the semester a student is on campus, it cannot be completed while abroad. More information on completion can be found in *James Scholar Distinction at Graduation* below
- Students who are abroad for both the fall and spring should speak with their academic advisor about options for completing the yearly Honors requirement

GRADUATING WITH JAMES SCHOLAR DISTINCTION

Please note: students continuing as James Scholars into their last year on campus will be able to graduate with College of Media James Scholar Distinction if they complete all James Scholar requirements detailed below during the **FALL term of their graduation year, REGARDLESS of the student’s graduating semester (fall, spring, or summer)! Also note the following**

To graduate with James Scholar distinction, students in Media’s program must

- Complete a minimum of 12 graded credit hours in their final fall term
- Earn a minimum of a 3.5 GPA in their final fall term and maintain a 3.5 cumulative GPA through the end of that term
- Complete the last of the **five** required Honors projects
 - At least one Honors project must be taken in this final fall term
 - Students joining the James Scholar program during the sophomore or junior year will need to make up Honors activities in order to graduate with a minimum of five
 - All five Honors activities must be completed by the **end of the fall term** of the student’s graduation year. The fifth project may not be pushed into the spring term
 - A student who completes multiple activities in one year and who has reached the five activity minimum before their graduation year still **MUST** complete an Honors activity in each remaining year in order to be re-certified for the following academic year. Each year a student is in the program, they should be completing at least one Honors activity
 - There is not a maximum number of activities that can be completed
 - Only **one** Honors grade per year completed while in another college on the Illinois campus may count in this total. Even if multiple Honors options were completed in one academic year while in another college, only one per year will count toward the five required
- The required credit hours and GPA rules are relaxed in the final spring term to allow a graduating spring or summer student the opportunity to be a part-time student
- A student must complete a minimum of four semesters (two academic years) as a James Scholar to graduate with James Scholar distinction

GRADUATING WITH JAMES SCHOLAR DISTINCTION CONT'D

- If all conditions are not met during the **fall** semester, the James Scholar notation will not be included in the college's May convocation program nor listed on the student's transcript for the final academic year
- Review is completed and students will be notified by mid-February if they will be listed as a James Scholar at graduation
- If a graduating senior studies abroad in their final fall term, they **may** petition to complete the final Honors project in the following spring. Students in this situation may NOT complete their senior year Honors project during the previous spring term

Beginning with the 2022–2023 academic year, ALL Media James Scholar students, regardless of class standing, need to complete FIVE HONORS ACTIVITIES by the end of their last fall term at Illinois to graduate with James Scholar distinction. Students in Media's program in 2021-2022 were notified of this change in August, 2021; at that time, sophomores and juniors were encouraged to make the necessary adjustments by planning to complete an extra Honors project or two throughout the 21-22 academic year. Thus, there will be NO EXCEPTIONS to this rule and petition requests will not be approved.

HONORS OPTIONS/PROJECTS

Media has a commitment to helping our students develop in areas of professional development, service learning, leadership, and research. As such, the options listed below allow each James Scholar the opportunity to pick the attribute upon which they would like to build in each given year. The options include existing programs and resources available on campus, while taking into consideration James Scholar principles of academic supervision, one-on-one interaction with a University of Illinois professor or staff member, and a minimum of 15 additional hours of work per project.

Students continuing as James Scholars must complete at least ONE of the Honors options below **each academic year**. The academic year refers to fall and spring terms; Honors projects CANNOT be completed over summer or winter terms. Additional information and/or applicable deadlines for Honors form submission are noted on the Honors Credit Learning Agreement (HCLA). **All forms must be submitted to Media's James Scholar Box folder at: <https://go.illinois.edu/MediaHonors> by 11:59pm CST on the deadline listed on the Honors Credit Learning Agreement (HCLA)**. Unless otherwise noted, deadlines ending at the "end of the 3rd" or "end of the 6th week of classes" refers to the Friday of that week, not the Sunday. **HCLA forms will NOT be accepted via email to the Honors Dean, the Media Student Services Center, or your academic advisor prior to or after this deadline.**

If questions remain about Honors options or requirements after a careful review of all information in this document, students should speak with their academic advisor. Please note some of the listed options require additional paperwork or the submission of a project in order for the Honors requirement to be considered complete. **Only options noted as repeatable will be counted multiple times.**

No matter the Honors option chosen, an HCLA form MUST be submitted following directions above to indicate completion of a project. Assumptions will not be made that completion of any activity approved per the HCLA without receipt of the actual HCLA form, was for the purpose of completing a James Scholar project. Please note, not all options will include Honors notation on a student's transcript. Those that qualify for Honors notation are noted as such. Also note that not all Honors options come with associated credit hours and coursework.

HONORS OR RESEARCH COURSEWORK OPTIONS

Traditional Course

Honors Notation?: With consent of instructor | Repeatable?: Yes | Due: end of 3rd (8-week) or 6th (full-semester) week of classes of semester in which course is completed (see below)

Complete an Honors Course Learning Agreement (HCLA) in a regular course on the Urbana-Champaign campus (this is the traditional Honors option).

- Project proposal and HCLA form for an 8-week course must be submitted by the end of the 3rd week of classes
- Project proposal and HCLA form for a 16-week course must be submitted by the end of the 6th week of classes
- Chosen course must be taken for standard letter grade, can only be taken in the **fall or spring term**, and must be a minimum of 3 credit hours
 - Student must receive at least a "B-H" grade in their course in order for it to count as an Honors project
- See **Additional Requirements and Information** below for more information

Campus Honors or James Scholar Designated Course

Honors Notation?: Yes | Repeatable?: Yes | Due: end of 3rd (8-week) or 6th (full-semester) week of classes of semester in which course is completed (see below)

Complete a Campus Honors course or other course designated for James Scholars.

- HCLA form for an 8-week class must be submitted by the end of the 3rd week of classes in the semester
- HCLA form for a 16-week class must be submitted by the end of the 6th week of classes in the semester
- Chosen course must be taken for standard letter grade, can only be taken in the **fall or spring term**, and must be a minimum of 3 credit hours
 - Student must receive at least a “B-H” grade in their course in order for it to count as an Honors project
- Campus Honors courses are eligible only to those who qualify for that program

Research Assistant or Independent Study Course

Honors Notation?: No | Repeatable?: Yes | Due: end of 3rd week from the first day of the course

Work as a research assistant or complete an approved independent study course.

- Independent Study courses must be taken as a full 16-week course for a standard letter grade, can only be taken in the **fall or spring term**, and must be a minimum of **3 credit hours**
- Student must already be registered for the specific research or independent study course listed on the HCLA form at the time of submission
- Students must earn a minimum of a “B-” grade in the course in order to count as an Honors project
- Independent Study forms can be found in the *Forms & Petitions* section of the Media Student Resources website

Undergraduate Research Symposium Participation

Honors Notation?: N/A | Repeatable?: No | Due: end of 6th week of spring classes

Student participates in the spring *Undergraduate Research Symposium*. **This option is NOT offered for course credit.**

- The Honors Dean will verify participation in the program with the Illinois Office of Undergraduate Research

SERVICE LEARNING OR GLOBAL STUDIES OPTIONS

GLBL 298 Global Studies Seminar Abroad

Honors Notation?: No | Repeatable?: No | Due: end of 3rd week from the first day of the course

Student participates in one of the several options offered in either the fall or spring semester. Examples of previous faculty-led locations include Benin, Peru, and South Africa.

- Must attend both class and trip abroad, earning at least a “B-” in the course, in order to qualify for Honors credit
- GLBL 298 is typically offered in either the first or second 8 weeks of the fall or spring semester
 - Trips occur over spring break, after May commencement, or during winter break
- Please see the *Course Explorer* for additional information on these courses

College of Media-sponsored James Scholar Designated International Study Course

Honors Notation?: With consent of instructor | Repeatable?: No | Due: end of 3rd week from the first day of the course

Student participates in a James Scholar designated program offered by College of Media's James Scholar program. Previous examples include London and Paris, as well as Munich and Amsterdam.

- Must attend both class and trip abroad, earning at least a “B-” in the course, in order to qualify for Honors credit
- The course is typically offered in either the first or second 8 weeks of the fall or spring semester
 - Trips occur over spring break, after May commencement, or during winter break
- The James Scholar Designated course **MUST** be international; domestic immersion trips do not qualify
- In order to qualify for the Honors credit, student must complete the associated course and an additional Honors project revolving around the international experience as determined by the faculty leading the course

Honors Living Learning Community Abroad Course

Honors Notation?: With consent of instructor | Repeatable?: No | Due: end of 3rd week from the first day of the course

Student participates in an Honors LLC Abroad 8-week course. Previous examples include Costa Rica as well as London and Paris.

- Residency in the Honors LLC may be required
- Must attend both class and trip abroad, earning at least a “B-” in the course, in order to qualify for Honors credit
- The course is typically offered in either the first or second 8 weeks of the fall or spring semester
 - Trips occur over spring break, after May commencement, or during winter break

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

Semester-long Internship

Honors Notation?: No | Repeatable?: No | Due: end of 6th week of classes of semester in which course is completed

Complete a College of Media-approved semester-long internship including successful completion of a 495 seminar course.

- Must be taken in the fall or spring semester only as summer internships do not apply
- The internship must be pre-approved by the College of Media's Career Services
- Must be registered for the seminar course (ADV, JOUR, or MACS 495) listed on the HCLA form at the time of submission
 - An "S" grade for the 495 course must be received, indicating completion of course requirements
- **The 495 seminar course offered is NOT included in the 12 graded hours required of the James Scholar program;** it is each student's responsibility to ensure they are enrolled in 12 graded hours in addition to the 495 seminar course

Ebert Fellowship in Media Criticism

Honors Notation?: No | Repeatable?: No | Due: 2 weeks following notification of position

The Ebert Fellowship in Media Criticism provides fellows with mentorship from a professional film critic, as well as increased development of the student's arts journalism and media criticism skills. The call for applicants is announced at the beginning of each fall semester. If awarded, a student is notified by the College of Media.

- Supporting documentation verifying student's acceptance into the Fellowship must be included with the HCLA by deadline noted above
- Must be registered for the ADV, JOUR, or MACS 495 EF section listed on the HCLA form at the time of submission
 - An "S" grade for the 495 course must be received, indicating completion of course requirements
- **The 495 seminar course offered is NOT included in the 12 graded hours required of the James Scholar program;** it is each student's responsibility to ensure they are enrolled in 12 graded hours in addition to the 495 seminar course

Illinois Public Media Faculty-Led Experience

Honors Notation?: Yes | Repeatable?: No | Due: end of 3rd week of classes of semester in which course is completed

Working with journalism faculty, students chosen for one of these courses will be learning to produce professional-quality news stories for the Illinois Public Media newsroom.

- Student must be registered in either JOUR 280 or 400 at the time of HCLA form submission
 - The chosen course may be taken for 1, 2, 3, or 4 credit hours
 - Student must receive at least a "B-H" grade in their course in order for it to count as an Honors project
 - Chosen course must be taken for standard letter grade, can only be taken in the **fall or spring term**
- Due to the nature of the course, no additional project proposal is required; however, both the student and the participating instructor must sign the HCLA form, acknowledging the Honors nature of the course
- Students may not receive credit for both JOUR 280 and 400 even though taken in separate semesters

LEADERSHIP OPTIONS

Academic Leadership Course

Honors Notation?: No | Repeatable?: No | Due: end of 3rd week of classes of semester in which course is completed

Only the following academic leadership courses taken on the Illinois campus will count for Honors credit: ACE 291, BADM 310, BADM 311, BADM 314, CMN 321, ENG 315, LEAD 230, LEAD 260, LEAD 340, LEAD 380, LEAD 460, LEAD 480, SE 361, SOCW 321. These courses are hand-selected from the Leadership Studies minor and the Leadership Certificate.

- No additional courses will count toward this option
- The course must be taken for standard letter grade
 - Students must earn a minimum of a "B-" in order for it to count as an Honors project

Student Representative to a University or Media Appointed Campus Committee

Honors Notation?: No | Repeatable?: No | Due: end of 6th week of classes; see below

Serve as a College of Media student representative on a Campus or Media committee, **including the Media Student Advisory Board**. Students may need to apply for these positions. **This option is NOT offered for course credit.**

- Supporting documentation verifying the student's role on the committee must be submitted along with the HCLA form by the end of the 6th week of classes, preferably in the fall unless a student's service does not begin prior to this date. In this case, the HCLA form should be submitted at the beginning of the spring term
- Students must be appointed either by the College of Media or a University unit (such as Office of the Dean of Students) to this committee in order to qualify

- Student will serve on these committees with University faculty and/or staff
- This option does NOT include participation in Registered Student Organizations

Representative to the Student Senate

Honors Notation?: No | Repeatable?: No | Due: end of 6th week of classes; see below

Serve as a College of Media representative on the Student Senate. To become a Senator, a student must apply for and win their college's seat in the Academic Senate during the spring semester, or fill a vacant seat in the Senate of the ISG. **This option is NOT offered for course credit.**

- Supporting documentation verifying the student's role in the Senate must be submitted along with the HCLA form by the end of the 6th week of classes, preferably in the fall unless a student's service does not begin prior to this date. In this case, the HCLA form should be submitted at the beginning of the spring term

Leadership Portfolio with Personal Development Plan

Honors Notation?: N/A | Repeatable?: No | Due: December 1st or April 1st depending on term of completion

Complete a Leadership Portfolio with a Personal Development Plan as required for the Leadership Certificate. **This option is NOT offered for course credit.**

- HCLA form must be submitted by December 1st for fall completion or April 1st for spring completion
- As seniors must complete Honors projects in the fall, spring completion for graduating seniors is NOT an option
- During the summer review period, the Leadership coach will be contacted to verify that the Leadership Portfolio was completed during the previous academic year

The Institute™ by LeaderShape®

Honors Notation?: N/A | Repeatable?: No | Due: end of 3rd week of spring semester classes following participation

The Institute™ by LeaderShape® is an I-Program offered by the Leadership Center over Winter Break. **This option is NOT offered for course credit.**

- The Honors Dean will verify participation in the program with the Leadership Center
- Students must apply in the fall for this opportunity

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- If a student is completing one of the Honors coursework options, the Honors Credit Learning Agreement (HCLA) form must be submitted by the stated deadline in order for the Honors designation to be entered onto the course. Deadlines are stated above and with the **HCLA Procedures** below
- If a student is completing an unlisted activity that they believe is representative of the categories represented, a petition may be filed using an Academic Petition found on the *Forms and Petitions* section of the Media's Student Resources website. These activities must be verifiable, supervised by an Illinois faculty or staff member, and must conform to the HCLA standard of approximately 15 hours of meaningful engagement
- All requirements for remaining in the James Scholar program **MUST** be completed on the Illinois campus. Courses taken off-campus are NOT considered when GPAs are calculated and credit hours are counted
- James Scholar status is reviewed each summer and students will be notified of their continuance or dismissal from the program before the next fall term begins. Because James Scholar review takes place once a year, a student who does not meet the requirements in the fall semester will remain in the program for the spring. However, they will be dropped during the summer review period and the James Scholar notation will not appear on the transcript for the previous academic year

PROCESS FOR COMPLETING A TRADITIONAL COURSE OPTION

Honors Credit Learning Agreement (HCLA) Procedures

- Check the syllabus of the course in which you wish to use an HCLA. Sometimes instructors have information and directions about completing an Honors project for their class written into the syllabus
- Contact the professor who teaches the course in which you wish to use an HCLA if explicit directions have not been outlined in the syllabus
- The course chosen must be taken for a minimum of 3 letter grade credit hours in a fall or spring semester
- Honors credit cannot be earned for summer or winter term coursework
- Be ready to submit a proposal in which you state the project you wish to work on

- Work with your professor to come to an agreement on a clear and approved written proposal
- Complete the HCLA form, email it to your cooperating instructor for their signature, and ask that they return it to you
- Save the HCLA form and your project proposal as ONE PDF document
- Submit the HCLA and project proposal by the end of the 3rd week for an 8-week class or by the end of the 6th week for a 16-week class to the College of Media's James Scholar Box folder at: <https://go.illinois.edu/MediaHonors>
- If you need a spare HCLA form, it has been sent to you by email and is available on the [James Scholar](#) website

Student Expectations for Completing an Honors Credit Learning Agreement

- Approach the professor with a clear plan describing the work you wish to complete WELL BEFORE the deadline
- Complete extraordinary work in the course; it is at the discretion of the instructor to determine whether the quality of your HCLA project exceeds regular coursework or if it is to be substituted in part for regular coursework
- Complete the project by the end of the semester in which the course is taken
- Meet with your instructor regularly to discuss your progress
- Devote approximately 15 additional hours of work time to an HCLA project

Consider the Following

- Honors courses are a unique way to enhance your classroom experience by collaborating with your instructor
- Your options for the project are many and you should base them on your areas of interest
 - Consider personal or career interests; use your project as an opportunity to research an area of personal interest, make professional contacts, enhance your resume, etc.
 - Consider your instructor's area of expertise and/or research; ask to participate in their research processes in a variety of settings and be open to their suggestions on project ideas
 - Review subject matter addressed in class and the areas in which you would like to expand your knowledge
 - **Think about how you could use your media skills to produce an extraordinary Honors project; produce a piece you could add to a portfolio**
- You cannot take an Honor's course Credit/No Credit and must receive at least a "B-" for your professor to assign an "H" letter grade attribute for the class
- Your instructor may decline to grant Honors credit if the HCLA project has not been completed satisfactorily. The instructor is the sole judge of whether Honors credit is to be granted

The "H" Grade Reminder

- During the last week of classes, remind your professor that you have been working on an HCLA and if you have successfully completed the project, they will need to designate an "H" grade when entering grades for the semester
- After grades have rolled, check to be sure that you have received an "H" for the appropriate course
- **It is the student's responsibility to check on the receipt of their "H" grade**
- If an "H" was not recorded, contact your professor to verify you successfully completed the Honors project. If you have, ask them to complete an online Grade Change Form on your behalf

If you, after reading this document thoroughly, have any questions please contact your academic advisor.