

# SPECIAL ACADEMIC OPTIONS

## Honors Programs

At SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, the Honors program helps students build relationships and is an excellent way to enhance the college experience. The Honors Program provides students in all academic majors with value-added educational experiences. Academic components of the program strengthen exploration and communication skills. Students complete intensive scholarship with faculty through their Honors Thesis.

Honors Students share their Honors Program experience with each other through Honors seminars and social events. They translate their academic skills into leadership roles in student government, clubs, and community service. Honors Students receive early registration privileges and access to honors sections of courses offered at ESF.

Students who successfully complete all requirements of the Honors Program receive honors medals that are worn to the College's Commencement ceremonies and recognition on their college transcript that they graduated with Honors.

### Admissions to the Honors Program

Admission to the program is extremely selective. Primary consideration is given to a student's academic record with a high school grade point average of 95% or higher, and high school class rank in the top 10% (where rankings are available). Honors Students are expected to be well-rounded with considerable contribution to extra-curricular activities and community service. Please note that these are minimum requirements and that the typical student admitted to Honors exceeds these requirements. The College generally admits no more than 40 first-year students to the program each year. As a result, qualified students may not receive an initial invitation but will be invited, or may apply, later in their college careers.

Exceptionally qualified students who have completed one year at ESF may receive an invitation to join the Honors Program. Any student with a GPA of greater than 3.5 who is completing research with a faculty mentor may apply to the Honors Program. Eligible and interested students may also contact the Director of the Honors Program or their department's representative to the Honors Program Advisory Council to apply to the Honors Program.

### Program Requirements

Honors Students must complete the following coursework:

- ESF 109 or ESF 209 Honors Program Seminar
- Two courses that contribute directly to the Honors thesis. These courses must be at the 400-level or above. Students in the ESF Honors Program may enroll in 600-level courses with permission of the instructor.
- A total of 6 credits of honors thesis credit (ESF 499) with a grade of B or better or similar research credits that are department specific (e.g., EFB 498).

Honors Students must supplement their work with a presentation of their research at a scholarly venue. This presentation could be at the ESF Spotlight on Student Research. Many students satisfy this requirement through presentations at regional, national or international scientific meetings.

Honors students are expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or higher.

## **The Honors Thesis**

The Honors Program provides the opportunity for students to complete intensive research and creative projects under the guidance of ESF's world-class faculty. This scholarship emphasizes and encourages holistic and multidisciplinary awareness of the problems and opportunities in studying and working with the natural and built environments. The subject matter and type of thesis is left open to the students and their advisors.

All ESF Honors Theses are uploaded to the Experts at ESF where they become available throughout the world. Many Honors Students publish their work in scholarly journals.

Honors Students are eligible for thesis enhancement grants (up to \$1000) to support their Honors thesis work.

## **Honors Program Advisory Council**

The Honors Advisory Council (HPAC) recommends policies and serve as advocates for the Honors Program to prospective students and the college, provide oversight for thesis and program standards, and make recommendations for admission to the Honors Program.

## **Education and Study Abroad**

SUNY ESF is committed to enhancing the internationalization of ESF students' academic experiences. ESF believes strongly that international experiences provide students with the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to be informed, active, responsible, and culturally-sensitive global citizens.

International programs range from short-term opportunities (1-2 weeks) to longer-term opportunities (1-2 semesters). Students are also eligible to study and/or research abroad on every continent and in 100+ countries. The Office of International Education is equally determined to make study abroad accessible to all despite financial, academic, or other person concerns. There is a program for everyone at ESF. For more information, check out the [Education Abroad website](#) or email OIE at [oe@esf.edu](mailto:oe@esf.edu).

## **Pre-professional Advising**

### **Medical and Health Professions (medicine, dentistry, optometry & veterinary medicine)**

ESF students interested in medicine (MD, MD/ PhD, Physician's Assistant, Nurse Practitioner or Registered Nurse), dentistry, optometry, physical therapy, and veterinary medicine are encouraged to identify themselves to the ESF Pre-Health Coordinator who can then assist them in exploring these pathways, including choosing the right major while at ESF, advising them on academic qualifications and preparing for the application process.

Entering ESF students interested in the health professions may participate in the Pre-Health sessions offered during Open House events, which allows them to meet with current Pre-Health students and helps incoming students to decide on the right major for their career path.

Depending on the chosen path, suitable majors might be Environmental Biology, Biotechnology, Biochemistry, Environmental Science or Environmental Health. Students will be connected with a Pre-Health advisor who has expertise in guiding Pre-Health students towards their future academic goals.

## **Law**

ESF offers pre-professional advising to students interested in pursuing law as a profession.

Unlike some other professional programs, law schools do not require or recommend a specific program of study or specific coursework. Instead, the Law School Admissions Council advises students who are interested in the legal profession to pursue undergraduate education that demonstrates success in intellectually challenging curricula that enhance students' critical thinking skills.

## **Combined Degree Program with Upstate Medical University**

SUNY Upstate Medical University (UMU) and ESF partner on a program providing access to a health-related combined degree.

The 3+3 Early Assurance for the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program allows students to complete both their undergraduate degree at ESF and their physical therapy doctoral degree at UMU in SIX years rather than seven years. The first year at UMU counts for both the fourth year of the bachelor's degree and the first year of the DPT.

This program is only available to first year applicants and has strict application deadlines. Applications to both ESF and UMU must be completed during the fall of the senior year of high school. Visit each college's website for more information on this program.

