

Features of Honors Education at Northeastern Faculty

One goal of an Honors education is to offer students who are particularly talented and ambitious additional experiences and opportunities, as appropriate, that will enable them to flourish intellectually, personally and professionally. Offering an Honors course or other Honors educational experience (e.g., a Dialogue of Civilization, faculty-mentored research and creative endeavors or service initiatives) is an extraordinary opportunity to foster creativity and to build community among a motivated group of students.

1. **Offer students opportunities to learn, master, and to apply or teach.** The hallmark of an Honors education may be to help students to develop the types of skill sets and intellectual ability that will enable them to impart knowledge and competencies to others—perhaps by solving a problem of common concern or by sharing their knowledge with fellow students.
 - a. In line with Honors students' ability to think critically and analytically, etc. and offer additional opportunities (and challenges) for project-based experiences, service-learning, research/creative endeavors, and to teach others.
 - b. Enable students to play an active role in creating learning experiences and assignments (Student-generated learning)
 - c. Honors experiences should quickly place students in an active role, and with few barriers and boundaries

2. Offer **intellectually engaging courses** using experiential teaching methods that stimulate students' curiosity:
 - a. The **content of Honors courses** are advanced, challenging (high difficulty level), encompassing or immersive (cover a wide span of topics or provide a particularly in-depth treatment of particular topics), or be accelerated (move through topics quickly).
 - b. **Interdisciplinary** perspectives are emphasized so that students can learn to consider issues and integrate knowledge stemming from various vantage points.

3. Offer **personalized mentorship** by the instructor, as feasible.

Although we cannot expect faculty to provide individual instruction to all Honors students, faculty can be alert to students' interests and guide them as appropriate. For example, by:

- a. Seeking to get to know students as individuals
- b. Being willing to continue the conversation outside of class, perhaps by engaging students in higher-level discussions related to course material or other topics of interest
- c. Cultivating and nurturing talent: Steering or referring students to additional opportunities as appropriate

- i. Connecting students to colleagues who are doing projects that align with the student's interests
- ii. Referring students to the Office of Undergraduate Research and Fellowship for help in preparing students to be competitive for advanced opportunities and/or prestigious fellowships
- iii. Enabling students to continue projects that have the potential for impact beyond the semester, when feasible

In order to ensure the feasibility of these kinds of personalized relationships, a seminar or small class structure is particularly conducive to the Honors experience.

4. Maximize opportunities for students to **integrate and apply** their learning, to develop intellectual connections across all forms of experiential learning, including co-ops, global, and service experiences with the aim of fostering students' holistic development and ability to form relationships with diverse audiences, within and beyond the university (e.g., peers, faculty, alumni, employers, and other stakeholders). Provide opportunities for students to integrate and reflect upon their growth and development.
5. **Encourage innovation, experimentation, entrepreneurship, and exploration** of new opportunities, particularly those opportunities that will enable students to have greater impact, enhance learning, and contribute to the well-being and quality of life of others within and beyond the Honors community.

One result of doing the above is the creation of an inclusive and accepting community of Honors students within the discipline through shared coursework and other educational experiences.