

Honors at Graduation

Students graduate with honors from Converse according to the following distinctions: cum laude, 3.50 but less than 3.75; magna cum laude, 3.75 but less than 3.90; summa cum laude, 3.90.

These standards refer to the Converse grade-point average; to qualify, a student must have a minimum of 60 hours of work at Converse or in Converse programs.

Graduation with honors in a specific field:

1. Honors work carries a maximum of six hours of elective credit allocated at the discretion of the department.
2. Each department may have additional guidelines which supplement and further define the procedures and qualifications for honors work.
3. Each department that does establish its own procedural and substantive guidelines for honors work should submit these guidelines to the Office of Research and Engagement, which will act as a central repository for the guidelines. These guidelines should include criteria by which honors work will be graded.
4. The Office of Research and Engagement works in collaboration with the Nisbet Honors program Directors for students who are enrolled in the Nisbet Honors program.
5. Each student has an advisory committee of faculty members who guide them as they develop their project or prepare for their performance.

Student eligibility

Because of the distinction that Honors conveys and the amount of effort required, only exceptionally qualified and extremely committed students should attempt an honors project. To qualify, students must have an overall GPA of 3.25 and a GPA of 3.50 in their major field by the end of fall term of their junior year. In exceptional cases, a student who does not meet these GPA criteria may petition for permission from the relevant academic Dean.

Project

1. This program enables qualified students to pursue additional independent and intensive work within their major area. Generally, the project will be a research paper that follows the discipline's guidelines for superior research. In creative fields, such as music, theater, and applied art, creative projects are appropriate. Interdisciplinary projects are also encouraged.
2. The project should be a substantial project planned so that it can be done in the time available using the resources available. The quality rather than the amount of work is the major evaluative criterion. A research paper should generally be from twenty to forty pages. Departments using performance standards should establish criteria that require a substantial project of superior quality.
3. An interdisciplinary project should reflect the disciplinary standards involved. While such a project works particularly well for a double major, other students may engage in such work.
4. Each department establishes its own presentation standards consistent with those of the discipline. Documentation within a paper should follow a recognized style sheet. The final paper should be clearly written and carefully proofread.

Advisory Committee Composition and Duties

1. The committee consists of five members. Two or three members come from the relevant department, with one serving as the director of the project. One or two come from related areas. One comes from an unrelated discipline. In some instances, one member in the discipline or a related area may come from another institution. Interdisciplinary projects should have

representatives from the disciplines involved, but should still include one member from outside the disciplines. The student, in consultation with their director, proposes the list of committee members. For music performance, the student's director and the Director of the School of Music select members from within the School of Music.

2. The committee advises the student, monitors their progress, and evaluates their project.

Timeline

Student's Junior Year

1. *Friday after Fall Break*: The Office of Research and Engagement will send an information package to all juniors which contains program details and eligibility requirements. (3.25 GPA overall, 3.5 in major).
2. *January term, last day of classes*: Working with a faculty mentor, student submits to their major department their proposal for a senior honors project. Faculty provide feedback and accept, accept with required revisions, or reject the proposal.
3. *Spring term, 2nd Friday*: Student submits a revised proposal with a suggested list of committee members to the Associate Provost for Research and Engagement.
4. *Spring term, Friday after break*: Student submits a 1-page progress report to their department and to the Associate Provost for Research and Engagement. If their progress is acceptable, their name, tentative title, and suggested committee list then go to the relevant Dean.
5. *Spring term, Friday after break*: The School of Music sends to the HP directors and Provost the names of students who will be participating in its performance-oriented honors-in-field projects.
6. *Spring term, first May faculty meeting*: The Provost announces the names of students accepted to do honors in field to the faculty.
7. *Summer*: Student works on project and checks in with mentor.

Student's Senior Year

1. *Fall Term, 3rd Friday after classes begin*: Student submits to their committee and HP directors a 1-page update on their progress.
2. *Fall Term, Last day of classes*: Student submits a 1-page update to the same group.
3. *January Term, Last day of classes*: Student submits a 1-page update again.
At this point a project may (and should) be terminated if the committee believes the student is not making suitable progress. The student should be reminded that the final draft of the project is due the Friday after Spring Break. At this stage, committee members may ask to see progress that goes beyond a 1-page update (e.g. a rough draft of the thesis or certain sections of the thesis).
4. *Spring Term, Friday after Spring Break*: The student submits their final project to their committee and arranges for public presentation. The committee will have two weeks to review the final project and provide comments, suggested revisions and final acceptance. For performance projects, other arrangements may be made for the due date.
5. *Spring Term, 3rd Friday after Spring Break*: Committee forwards its tentative evaluation to Associate Provost for Research and Engagement. If the project is tentatively accepted, the student continues with their plans for public presentation.
6. *Spring Term, last week of classes*: For written projects, the student and their faculty director contact the head librarian about arrangements for binding and processing the thesis. The student is responsible for learning about the library's requirements and for delivering the appropriate number of copies of their thesis in the required form. Student submits a correct electronic copy to the Associate Provost for Research and Engagement. Committee submits its final evaluation to the Associate Provost for Research and Engagement, the relevant Dean, and the Registrar.
7. *Spring Term, second May faculty meeting*: The Provost announces the names of students who will receive honors in field at graduation.

Evaluation Procedures

1. An honors project should add to the discipline's standards for superior work exhibiting originality of thought and creativity of effort. Such work may be a research paper, an original work, a one-person show, or a performance, but in any case should display the highest standards expected of undergraduate work in the discipline. A project that is purely secondary in nature, such as a literature review, is generally not suitable for honors designation unless it develops a new interpretation or breaks new ground.
2. Using departmental guidelines, the thesis committee evaluates the project and tentatively accepts or rejects it.
3. If the committee tentatively accepts the project, the student arranges for public presentation. This presentation is not intended as a "defense" like a dissertation defense, but as a discussion of themes raised by the project. The presentation is open to Converse students, faculty, staff, and the general public. This presentation enables the student to present their work clearly and intelligibly to the wider community. In music performance, the public performance satisfies this requirement.
4. Following the oral presentation and discussion, the committee makes a final decision regarding the project's acceptability for honors and reports the final evaluation to the Associate Provost for Research and Engagement, the relevant Dean, and the Registrar.

Class Honors

In each of the first three classes returning to Converse, the three students with the highest average are designated as "Class Honor Students," a total of nine students. In case of a tie for the year, the cumulative average breaks the tie. These names are announced either at the opening Convocation in the fall or another suitable time.

The Dean's List

Eligibility for the Dean's List, prepared at the end of each fall and spring term, is based on the following criteria:

1. The student must be full-time;
2. The student must have no incomplete grades in that term;
3. First year freshmen must have a 3.4 GPA that term;
4. All other full-time students must have a 3.6 GPA in that term.
5. A Dean's List is determined for the fall term and the spring term. To be eligible for the Dean's List a student must be a degree candidate and take at least nine semester hours of academic courses during the term. The Dean's List does not include those students working toward a graduate degree.