



Undergraduate Degrees with Distinction and Degrees with Honors: Crookston, Morris, Rochester, Twin Cities

Policy Statement

1. General Provisions

- a. Any campus may offer both degrees with honors and degrees with distinction, only one, or neither.
- b. A student may obtain both a degree with honors and a degree with distinction, if offered by the campus from which the degree is awarded, **provided the student has met the requirements for both.**
- c. For the purpose of awarding degrees with honors and degrees with distinction, the overall performance of degree candidates on each campus will be judged in relationship to the performance of degree-seeking students on that campus, not in relationship to other University students.
- d. To qualify for either a degree with distinction or a degree with honors, a student must have completed 60 or more **graded** semester credits at the University of Minnesota. For the purposes of meeting the **grade-grade** point average (GPA) standards set forth in this policy, only University of Minnesota course work will factor into the GPA calculation.
- e. It is the expectation of the Faculty Senate that in general, a campus will not award degrees with honors and with distinction **to**, in total, **to** more than approximately 10—15 **percent**% of any graduating class.
- f. The University transcript **key** will contain a brief explanation of the difference between a degree with distinction and a degree with honors.
- g. The Senate Committee on Educational Policy will review annually data on the number and percentage of students on each campus who receive degrees with distinction and degrees with honors.

2. Degrees with Distinction

- a. The initiative in establishing degrees with distinction will lie with the campuses concerned and must be approved by the chief academic officer on the campus.
- b. To graduate "with distinction," a student must have a cumulative **grade-grade** point average of 3.750 or higher at the time the student graduates. To graduate "with high distinction," a student must have a cumulative **grade-grade** point average of 3.900 or higher **at the time the student graduates.**
- c. The **grade-**point average is the sole determinant of the granting of degrees "with distinction" or "with high distinction." Campuses may choose to offer only degrees "with distinction" or only degrees "with high distinction," but in either case they would be subject to section 2(b) of this policy.

3. Degrees with honors and campus honors programs

- a4. The requirements for a degree with honors will not consist of only the accomplishment of a designated amount of course work or achievement of a stipulated grade-point average, but will also include a definite standard of excellence in scholarship with specific evidence of ability to accomplish independent or original work. To obtain a degree with honors, the student must participate in a fully developed campus honors program.
- b2. The initiative for establishing degrees with honors (that is, cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude) will lie with each campus and must be approved by the chief senior-academic officer on the campus. Qualifications for degrees with honors must meet the requirements of sections 3(b-d) of this policy.
- c3. A campus desiring to grant degrees with honors must propose an honors program, specifying how honors students are to be selected; the nature, depth, and breadth of the honors requirements; and the general requirements for obtaining a degree cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude.
- d4. The minimum cumulative grade-point average in courses taken after the completion of the final 60 graded semester credits will be 3.500 to obtain a degree "cum laude," 3.666 for a degree "magna cum laude," and 3.750 for a degree "summa cum laude." Campuses have the authority to adopt higher grade-point averages. Students whose GPA is 0.100 or less below one of these three bands may be considered for the band above based on exceptional thesis work, the standards for, and process of evaluation for, to be determined solely by the campus honors program.
- e5. Campuses will attempt to ensure that there is reasonable consistency across units in the amount of work required of its students to obtain degrees with honors.

Reason for Policy

Students who achieve high academic performance as evidenced in their grade-point average or who participate in an honors program (either University- or campus-based) receive recognition on their transcripts and diplomas. The standards for graduating with distinction and/or honors need to be clearly articulated so they can be applied consistently, and so students know what is required to achieve these recognitions.

Procedures

There are no procedures associated with this policy.

Forms/Instructions

There are no forms associated with this policy.

Appendices

There are no appendices associated with this policy.

Frequently Asked Questions

[FAQ: Undergraduate Degrees with Distinction and Degrees with Honors](#)

Contacts

Subject	Contact	Phone	Email
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Responsible Individuals

Responsible Officer	Policy Owner	Primary Contact
Executive Vice President and Provost	Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education	Amber Cellotti, Deputy Registrar and Director, Office of the Registrar

Definitions

Graduating with Distinction

Degree with distinction indicates graduation with a high cumulative grade--point average; the words “with distinction” or “with high distinction” are printed on the transcript and on the diploma.

Graduating with Honors

Degree with honors indicates completion of the campus-specific requirements in a fully developed campusfor the honors program, and is printednoted on the transcript and on the diploma.

The Honors Program (Morris)

Successful completion of the Honors Program, an interdisciplinary curriculum team-taught by faculty from across the campus, provides the student a degree “with hHonors” in recognition of the student’s achievement.

University Honors Program (Twin Cities)

The University Honors Program (UHP) is a selective program that provides an enriched and intellectually stimulating academic experience for University of Minnesota; Twin Cities students and provides a path toward graduation with Latin hHonors. The UHP provides a unique set of experiences for students including tailored curricular offerings, personalized academic advising, and a wide variety of co-curricular opportunities. Students are either offered admission to UHP upon acceptance to the University or can apply for admission to UHP as a current student.

Graduating with Latin Honors (Twin Cities)

Graduation with Latin hHonors (cum laude, magna cum laude, summa cum laude) is available to those students who have a GPA of 3.500 or higher and have completed the requirements of the University Honors Program. Students who have met the requirements may be considered for the following Latin hHonors gGraduation lLevels:

- Cum laude: 3.500 GPA or higher
- Magna cum laude: 3.666 GPA or higher
- Summa cum laude: 3.750 GPA or higher

Students whose GPA is 0.100 or less below one of these three bands may be awarded Latin **h**Honors based on exceptional thesis work as determined by the student's campus honors program.

Responsibilities

There are no specified responsibilities associated with this policy.

Related Information

Administrative Policy: Grading and Transcripts: Crookston, Morris, Rochester, Twin Cities

Crookston Campus: Degree with Distinction

History

Amended:

January 2019 - Comprehensive Review. The revision would allow degrees to be awarded with honors in cases where a student has exceptional thesis work but missed the GPA cut-off by a small margin (0.100).

Amended:

January 2011 - Title modified so to clarify that Policy applies to Undergraduate Degrees.

Amended:

December 2009 - Policy now applies to Crookston.

Effective:

April 2009