

Welcome to the ACES James Scholar Honors Program!

The ACES James Scholar Honors Program empowers exceptional undergraduates to enhance their academic experiences through a broad array of activities. Participation is open to all qualified students enrolled in any degree program within the College of ACES.

James Scholars can take maximum advantage of the College's distinguished teaching talent and research facilities to expand their horizons and gain a competitive edge. The Honors Dean, the Honors Secretary, and the Departmental Honors Coordinators provide advice and encouragement to James Scholars as they work toward achieving their professional goals within the Honors Program.

A Legacy of Excellence

The first freshman class of James Scholars enrolled in the College of Agriculture in **September 1959**. The opportunity to conduct undergraduate research first became available to James Scholars in 1982 with the inauguration of the Jonathan Baldwin Turner (now ACES) Undergraduate Research Scholarship Program. In 1995, the College of Agriculture changed its name to the College of ACES, and just four years later, in 1999, the ACES James Scholar Honors Program was reorganized and revitalized under the leadership of Dr. Wayne Banwart, Dr. Kirby Barrick, and Dr. Bryan White. Since the Honors Program's renaissance in 1999, some 150 alumni have graduated from the University of Illinois with ACES James Scholar Distinction. The Honors Program maintains contact with its graduates through *Ultreia*, an electronic quarterly newsletter produced exclusively for ACES James Scholar alumni.

During its fifth decade, the Honors Program has been enriched through the publication of monthly, quarterly, and annual periodicals. The development of the ACES James Scholar website since fall 2004 has led to a wide dissemination of information and publications to James Scholars and their advisors, especially the *ACES Honors Handbook*. The addition of two annual writing competitions, student representation on the ACES Honors Council, and the formation of the James Scholar Media Team have provided James Scholars with extracurricular opportunities to develop their literary talents and leadership skills.

The ACES James Scholar Motto "Ad astra per aspera!" "To the stars through striving!"



Benefits of ACES James Scholar Status

- **Early priority registration** starting in November of the freshman year allows access to high-demand courses and sections.
- A **free subscription** to *Cursus Honorum (Course of Honors)*, the Honors Program's monthly email newsletter.
- **Professional development** by attending the annual ACES Honors Symposium.
- **Extracurricular activities** including the James Scholar Media Team and two writing competitions each year.
- **Individualized faculty advising** in preparation of the Honors Completion Plan and during the development and implementation of the undergraduate research project.
- The opportunity to **conduct individual research** in your specific area of interest and have your research findings published in *Abstracta Bentleyana (Bentleyan Abstracts)*, our online research journal.
- **Scholarships and grants** to assist with tuition and funding expenses for an undergraduate research project.
- Graduation as an **ACES James Scholar** with a certificate of achievement, a commemorative bronze medallion, and the **University James Scholar** designation listed on your academic record.
- **Excellent preparation** for admission to graduate programs and professional schools (e.g.,

dentistry, law, medicine, optometry, and veterinary medicine).

Year-by-Year Program Overview

Freshman Year

- Designation as an ACES James Scholar is offered to entering freshmen who have a composite ACT score of 28 or higher AND a projected GPA of 3.00 or higher as determined by the Office of Admissions and Records.
- Freshmen who do not accept or qualify upon admission may apply for ACES James Scholar status during the first half of their second semester if they have achieved a GPA of 3.40 or higher during their first semester.

Scholars' Activities:

1. Completion of at least 14 graded UI credit hours each semester with a cumulative GPA of 3.40 or higher.
2. At least one honors activity is required during the freshman year. Completion of a course with an Honors Credit Learning Agreement (HCLA), an honors section of any course, a Campus Honors Program (CHP) course, or another approved activity that involves effort beyond normal academic requirements.
3. Attend the annual Honors Symposium.

Sophomore Year

Participation is open to:

- Newly admitted and continuing ACES students who have sophomore status and a cumulative GPA of 3.40 or higher.

Scholars' Activities:

1. Participating students develop an Honors Completion Plan during their sophomore year. The Honors Completion Plan has curricular rigor that exceeds the minimum requirements of specific curricula as defined in the *ACES Student Handbook* and includes an undergraduate research project (bachelor's thesis, laboratory project, or design project).
2. Completion of at least 14 graded UI credit hours each semester with a cumulative GPA of 3.40 or higher.
3. At least one honors activity is required during the sophomore year. Completion of a course with an HCLA, an honors section of any course, a CHP course, or another approved activity that

involves effort beyond normal academic requirements.

- Attend the annual Honors Symposium.

Junior and Senior Years

Participation is open to:

- Newly admitted and continuing ACES students maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.40 or higher with an approved Honors Completion Plan. Students may apply for admission to the ACES James Scholar Honors Program no later than four semesters before their expected graduation date from the University of Illinois.

Scholars' Activities:

- Fulfill the Honors Completion Plan and complete an undergraduate research project.
- Completion of at least 14 graded UI credit hours each semester with a cumulative GPA of 3.40 or higher.
- At least one honors activity is required during both the junior and senior years. Completion of a course with an HCLA, an honors section of any course, a CHP course, **ACES 199 JS: Honors Seminar**, or another approved activity that involves effort beyond normal academic requirements.
- Attend the annual Honors Symposium during each academic year.
- Present a poster display of the undergraduate research project results at ExplorACES or another approved event.



The ACES Undergraduate Research Project

As an in-depth, challenging experience, the research project will acquaint you with the current literature in your discipline, develop your investigative skills and techniques, and prepare you for a

professional career in agricultural, consumer, or environmental sciences. The project is developed in conjunction with the ongoing or related research of your project advisor. Interdisciplinary projects are encouraged.

Upon completion of the research project, results are presented as a poster display at the annual ExplorACES event or another professional venue. A written abstract of project findings is also submitted to the Honors Dean to be considered for publication in *Abstracta Bentleyana*.

Please Visit Our Website @

http://students.aces.uiuc.edu/james_scholars

For More Information



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The ACES James Scholar Honors Program



*Fostering a Legacy of
Scholastic Achievement since
1959*

