HON4098/9, Honors Scholars Program
Thursdays, 6:30-8:00pm
Mark H. Mann, PhD

Objective: The purpose of the Honors Program at PLNU is to prepare students for the world of post-baccalaureate scholarship and research. Students will work closely with a faculty mentor on an in-depth research project of their choosing culminating in the presentation of their findings at a conference during the spring semester. In preparation for completion of their projects and participating in the conference, students will be coached through the various stages of conducting a research project and transforming their work into a scholarly presentation. Throughout the semester, students will be given the opportunity both to practice presenting before a group and to learn by witnessing and evaluating the presentations of their peers.

Course Learning Outcomes: By the end of this program, students will have:
1. Understand the nature, purpose and goals of Christian scholarship;
2. Developed skills for participation in scholarly communities;
3. Demonstrate the ability to undertake and complete a scholarly research project.

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Office Hours: By arrangement 2nd Smee 206

Qualifications: The minimum GPA for entry into the program is a cumulative 3.5. When the student shows exceptional promise, and at the discretion of the department chair and Program director, this requirement may be waived.

Faculty Mentor: An advisor will be identified and formally approved by the Program director by May of the junior year (i.e. one year prior to graduation).

The Scholar's Committee: A Committee will be formally approved by the Program director at the recommendation of the project mentor not later than September 15 of the student's senior year.

Seminar Participation: During the Fall semester, Scholars will be required to participate in a weekly seminar/workshop in which they will be coached through the various stages of conducting a research project and transforming their work into a scholarly presentation.

Presentation Reviews: Students will be assessing each other's presentations using an evaluation form established for the Honors program.

Project Deadline: Students will successfully complete an honors thesis or project by mid-April of the senior year and will defend it orally before their committee before the April Honors Conference.

Honors Conference: In mid-to-late April, the University will host an Honors Conference to which all faculty, parents, and prospective honors students will be invited. All Honors Scholars will present their findings. Papers will be published in the online PLNU Honors Journal—Arete. Prospective Honors Scholars (those who will go through the process in the following year) will be required to attend the Conference and, in association with this, attend a workshop that will initiate them in the process of doing their own honors project. The workshop may include presentations of several successful seniors who will discuss the range of issues associated with completion of a quality project.

Grading: This is a pass-fail course. The point of the class is not to do or learn what you think the professor thinks you need to do or learn, but to develop and hone skills that will assist you in making a successful transition to the world of post-graduate scholarship.

University Recognition: Student-Scholars will be recognized at graduation, their transcript will show that they have taken the Honors Project course, and their diploma will indicate "Graduation with Honors."

Project Standards: The PLNU Honors Scholars Program has been established to allow students the opportunity to do advanced scholarly activities beyond the level of scholarship required within typical undergraduate programs. Although the disciplines are quite diverse, all projects undertaken by Honors Scholars must demonstrate the following:

1. The project advances a novel and substantive scholarly contribution in the student's discipline. (Projects should include more than just a literature review, unless the review itself advances a novel and substantive contribution to the discipline.
2. The scope and quality of the project substantially exceed any assignment or project that a student would be expected to complete in a regular, single-semester course or a capstone project required of all students within a particular major (e.g., senior recital, thesis, etc.
3. The project subscribes to the scholarly standards of an established disciplinary-specific undergraduate honors society
4. The scope and quality of the project are such that the final product could reasonably be expected to be accepted for publication and/or presentation in a moderated undergraduate publication, conference, exhibition, etc.

Academic Honesty: The PLNU catalog states, "Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. Such acts include plagiarism, copying of class assignments, and copying or other fraudulent behavior on examinations." Instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to administrators and will result in a zero on the assignment and potential failure and/or de-enrollment from the course. The safest way to avoid plagiarism is ALWAYS to give credit to your sources, and if you have any questions about when you need to give a source credit, err on the side of doing so. I am also more than happy to give you further instruction on how and when it is appropriate to cite a source.

Inclusive Language: The PLNU School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the department urges students, faculty and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions and especially in their writings.

Special Needs: At PLNU students requesting academic accommodations must file documentation with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student's instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual learning needs of the student. This policy assists the University in its commitment to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990, and ADA Amendments Act of 2008, all of which prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities.

Use of Technology: PLNU encourages the use of technology for learning, communication, and collaboration. In this course, we will rely on E-class for accessing course materials, submitting assignments, and collaborating in discussion boards and blogs. You'll want to make sure you are comfortable with these tools, so take advantage of our computer Lab Techs to answer questions and help you with any technology issues. You may also call the Help Desk at x2222.

FERPA: The university may disclose education records to college officials with legitimate educational interests. A college official is a person employed by the university; a member of the Board of Trustees; or an individual serving on a committee, such as disciplinary or grievance committees. PLNU also includes among college officials a student appointed to an official committee or assisting another official in performing tasks. A college official has a legitimate educational interest if the information aids the official in fulfilling professional functions.

Essentially, this means that if a parent or family member calls me and asks about how you are doing in class, I am legally not allowed to discuss your work with them. The best ways of including your parents in the general progress of your academic life is to grant them access to the portal and to talk to them regularly. For a full presentation of the University's policy on FERPA consult the catalog: http://catalog.pointloma.edu/