Advising

201 Commonwealth Honors College - Bloom Honors Advising Center, 413-545-2483

The advising unit of Commonwealth Honors College is comprised of full-time professional advisors, part-time faculty advisors, and undergraduate peer advisors who can provide students with information and advice on all aspects of their careers as Commonwealth Honors College students.

**Honors advisors** primarily assist Commonwealth Honors College students with fulfilling honors graduation requirements and with learning about honors opportunities. Honors advisors can also assist students with choosing a major and with optimizing the benefits of being in an honors college within a large university. **Peer advisors** are particularly helpful in providing an honors student perspective on navigating Commonwealth Honors College and the University in general.

Careful planning will allow students to meet honors requirements while participating in a wide variety of academically-based opportunities such as internships, co-ops, study abroad, leadership training, and Five College courses and activities.

**CHC Advising Services**

**Appointment Advising** – Students may call 413-545-2483 between 9-5 to schedule an appointment or book online [here](https://www.honors.umass.edu). The first two weeks of each semester, plus November and April, are our busiest advising periods and necessitate rapid triage advising. October and March (or other non-peak periods) offer an opportunity for more comprehensive advising. Note: students with course-scheduling needs and time-urgent concerns are given priority during peak times.

**Drop-in Advising** – During designated Drop-in times, advisors are on duty to help students on a first come, first served basis. Simply stop by the CHC Office and sign in at the reception desk. Sign-in begins 5 minutes prior to any given session. Drop-in hours are:

- Tuesday 2-4
- Wednesday 10-12
- Thursday 10-12
- Friday 2-4

**Peer Advising** - Our team of peer advisors is well trained and ready to help! Peer advisors are always available between 9-5 to answer a quick question or meet one-on-one and give advice from a student perspective. Stop by or call anytime.
**Email Advising** - Have a quick question? Email advisor@honors.umass.edu and receive a quick reply. Email inquiries receive a response within 3 business days.

**Common Questions About Advising**

**Why should I speak to an Honors advisor?**
Our skilled advising staff can help you with a variety of academic or personal issues including:

- Identifying campus resources that can help you achieve your goals
- Choosing a major and/or identifying the right path for you
- How to be proactive in approaching your Honors Thesis or Project
- Staying on track and meeting honors graduation requirements

**How do I make an appointment to talk to an Advisor?**
Click on the "Book Now!" button above. Or stop by the CHC Office at the Bloom Honors Advising Center, 201 Commonwealth Honors College, 157 Commonwealth Ave., or call 413-545-2483.

**When is it best to schedule an appointment?**
To ensure a successful experience here at CHC, we require all students to meet with an advisor in their first semester of membership and then at least once a year thereafter. We recommend that you schedule qualitative check-ins and future-planning sessions at non-peak times (see "Appointment Advising" above).

**Can I obtain advising if I’m out of the state/country?**
Yes! If you are geographically unable to come into the office, CHC advisors can also assist you over the phone or via Skype. When you call the reception desk, make sure to let them know your preference.

**Additional University Advising Resources**

Commonwealth Honors College advisors will refer students to an array of program, opportunity, resource, and service advisors, including Chief Undergraduate Advisors, Honors Program Directors, and Academic Deans.

**Chief Undergraduate Advisor (CUA) or Major Advisor:** The CUA is the advisor in your major department who is responsible for coordinating undergraduate advising for students in your major. When you are seeking advice about fulfilling major or minor requirements, you should see the CUA in the department’s undergraduate advising office. If you don’t have a major, visit Undergraduate Advising Services in 615 Goodell for assistance and see your Honors College advisors. It is a good idea to bring a copy of your Commonwealth Honors College requirements with you when you are meeting with advisors other than your Honors College advisors.

**Honors Program Director:** This advisor from your major department acts as a liaison to Commonwealth Honors College and oversees honors students who are enrolled in the Departmental Honors track. The Honors Program Director oversees your admission to, and progress related to, departmental honors, as well as reviews honors independent studies and course substitutions for departmental honors credit. The
Honors Program Director is a good resource if you are having difficulty finding departmentally-based honors courses or honors thesis or project committee members.

**Academic Dean:** Your Academic Dean advises you on issues related to your college requirements such as foreign language and Global Education requirements. The Dean can also guide you when you are seeking exceptions to standard policy, e.g., permission to increase your semester credit limit, add a course after the end of the add/drop period, or drop a course after the end of the “W” period due to extenuating circumstances.

**Other Mentoring:** Instructors and professionals with whom you have worked closely can provide additional guidance. They are also an excellent source for personalized letters of recommendation as you near graduation. These individuals can offer first-hand knowledge of your academic abilities, motivation, reliability, and creativity. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to establish mentoring relationships with these individuals. Not only will you be able to request letters of recommendation with confidence, your studies will also benefit from your mentors' experience and expertise.

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