

University Honors



ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025AY



Director's Message

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2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

What an inaugural year!

As the Faculty Director of University Honors, I am pleased to report that our program continues to thrive!

Building on the strong foundation laid by my predecessor, Dr. Richard Cardullo, the wonderful University Honors staff and I were able to provide our students with many enriching activities: five field trips to cultural events, including “Hamilton” at the Pantages; a class presentation by renowned muralist, Robert Vargas; and a dialogue between Chancellor Kim Wilcox and New York Times best-selling author and former UCR Honors student, Ryan Holiday, organized by faculty fellow, Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing, Susan Straight. Our students distinguished themselves academically, as well. Of the 124 who completed capstone projects, 70% had immediate plans to attend graduate or professional school. Fourteen students graduated as Howard H Hays, Jr. scholars and 17 were inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. Fifteen students studied abroad and eight participated in UCDC. Thanks to the generosity of alumni and friends of University Honors, we raised over \$16,000 on Give Day, winning four campus-wide fundraising challenges.

All this to say—our students are doing University Honors proud. I thank all of you who make our program possible: the Howard H Hays, Jr. Family; our faculty fellows, faculty-mentors, and instructors of our Honors courses; and our alumni.

Sincerely,



Begoña Echeverria, PhD
Howard H Hays Jr., Chair and Faculty Director
Professor, School of Education
Associate Dean, Division of Undergraduate Education

About Honors

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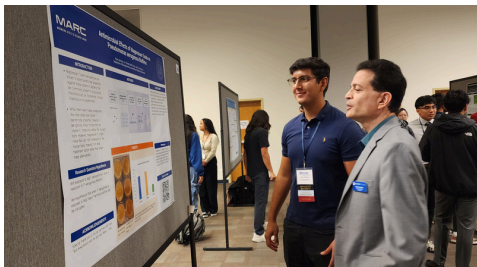
MISSION STATEMENT

University Honors engages a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff in the creation of global citizens through high-impact experiences that emphasize original scholarship, contribution, creativity, and innovation.

VISION STATEMENT

University Honors will be nationally recognized as a model college that produces graduates who are highly sought for premier opportunities and who continue to develop as lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and future leaders.

PILLARS OF EXCELLENCE



**PROMOTING CREATIVITY
& INNOVATION**



**CULTIVATING A CULTURE
OF CONTRIBUTION**



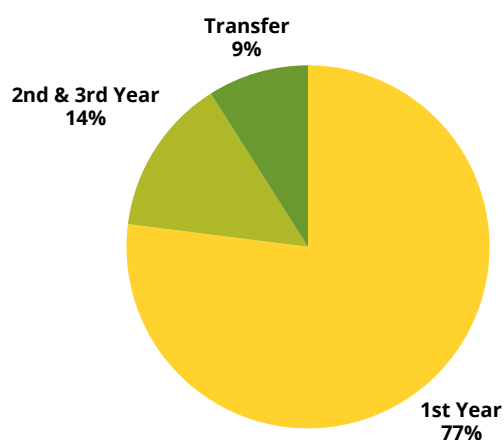
**CELEBRATING DIVERSITY &
GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP**

Statistics

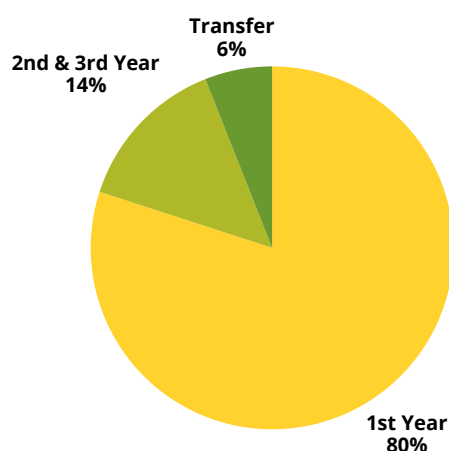
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Fall 2024 Admissions

Applicants



Admits



Statement of Intent to Register

89%
First-Year

11%
Transfer

Grade Point Average at Admission

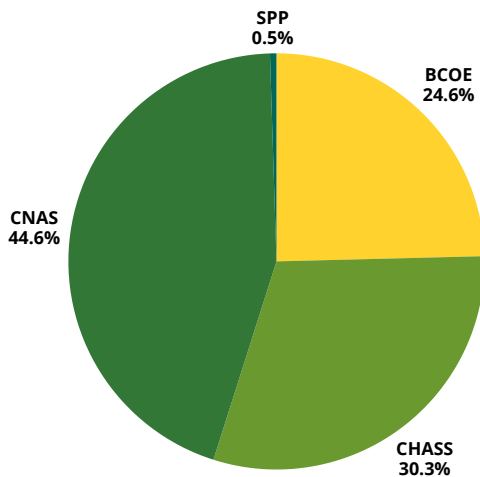


Statistics

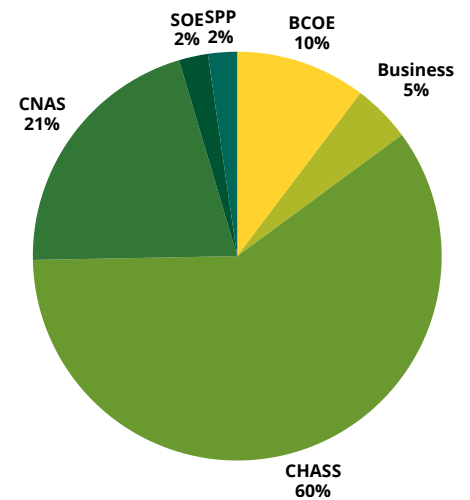
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College & School Distribution

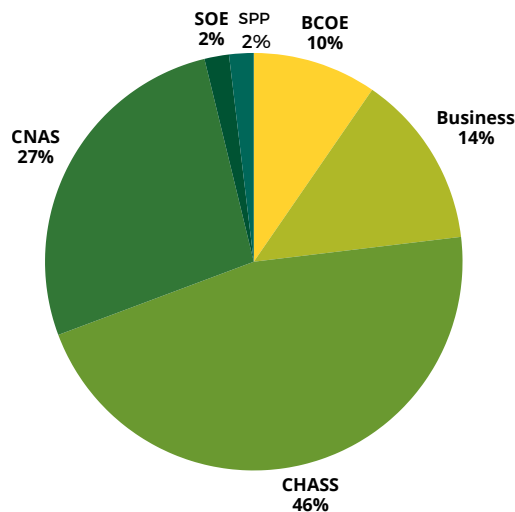
First-Year



Second-Year & Third Year



Transfers



Scholarships

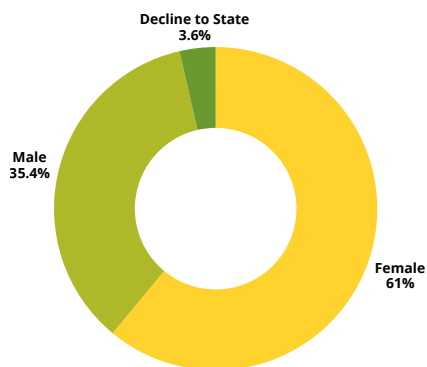
	Regent's Scholars	Chancellor's Scholars	Achievement Scholars
First-Years	0	6	8
Second-Year & Third-Year	0	0	2

Statistics

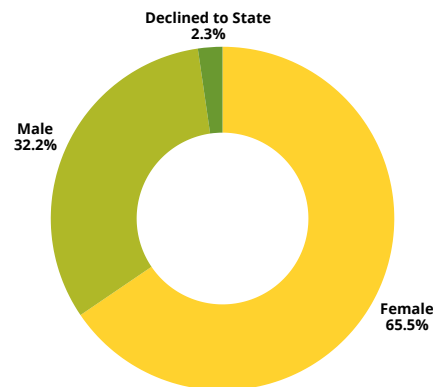
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Gender

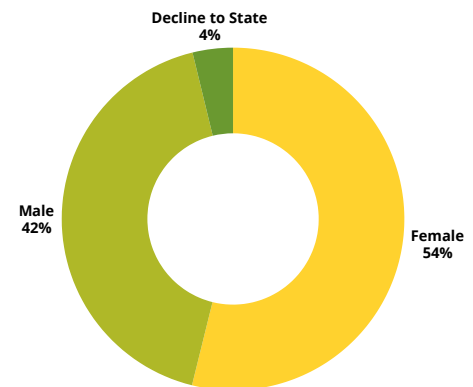
First-Year



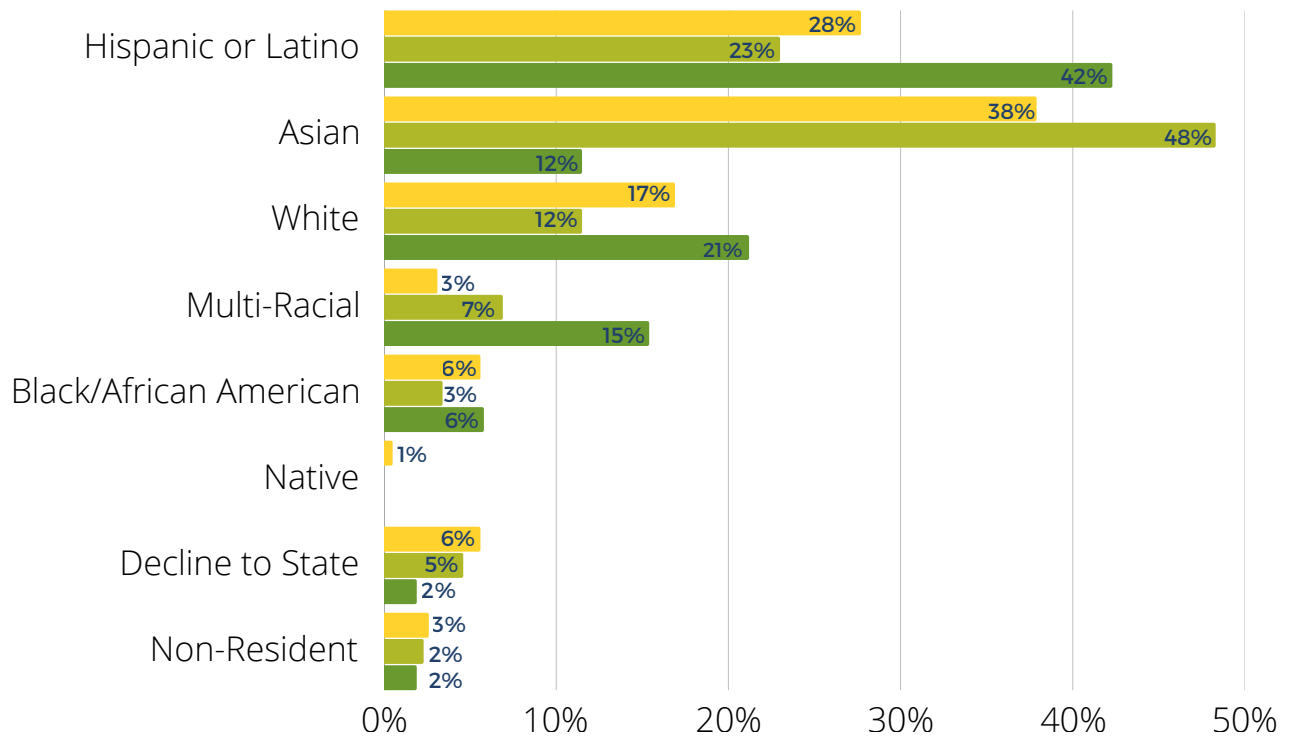
Second-Year & Third Year



Transfers



Ethnicity



First-Year



Second-Year & Third Year



Transfer

Statistics

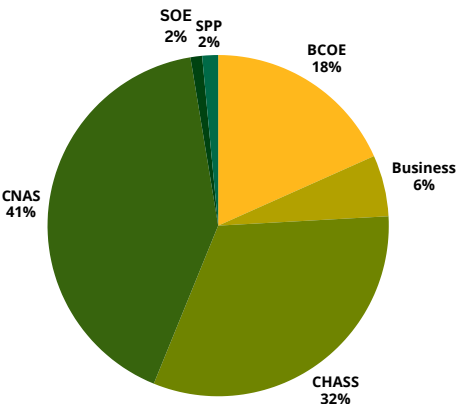
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First Generation & Low Income

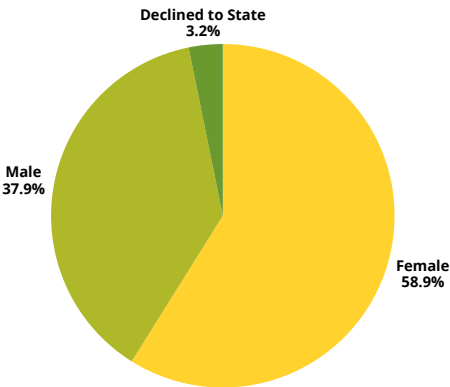
	First-Generation	Low-Income	First-Generation & Low-Income
First-Years	27%	23%	16%
Second-Year & Third-Year	20%	15%	13%
Transfers	46%	23%	15%

College & School Distribution



Grade Point Average
3.68
First-Generation
33%
Low-Income
23%
First-Generation & Low Income
15%

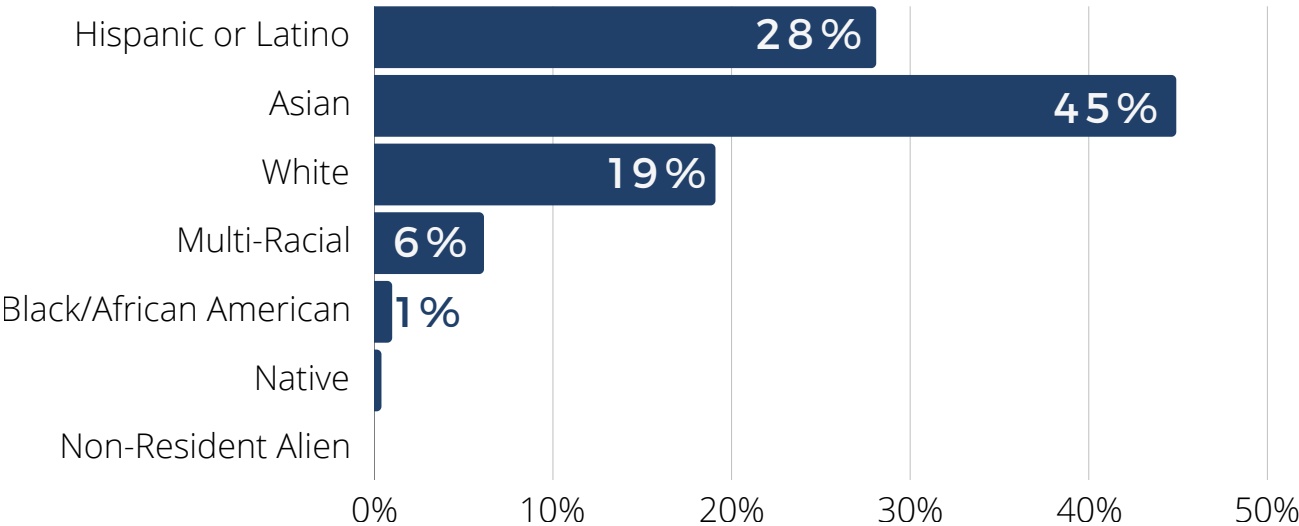
Gender



Scholarships

Regents' Scholars
4
Chancellor's Scholars
6
Achievement Scholars
8

Ethnicity



University Honors Faculty Fellows

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DAVID COCKER
BCOE



NIGEL HUGHES
CNAS



KELLY HUFFMAN
CHASS



AMANDA LUCIA
CHASS



KELECHI KALU
CHASS



SUSAN STRAIGHT
CHASS



XÓCHITL C. CHÁVEZ
CHASS
FACULTY IN RESIDENCE
PENTLAND HILLS



VORRIS NUNLEY
CHASS
FACULTY IN RESIDENCE
GLEN MOR



RICHARD EDWARDS
CHASS
FACULTY IN RESIDENCE
XCITE

Faculty & Course Statistics

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3

**FACULTY IN
RESIDENCE**



5

**FACULTY LED
FIELDTRIPS**

- Hamilton at the Pantages
- Norton Simon Museum
- A Conversation with Ryan Holiday & Chancellor Wilcox
- Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
- Huntington Library



25

COURSES

Course Enrollment

Fall: 720
Winter: 465
Spring: 435



Honors Recognition

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Howard H Hays Jr. Scholars

Recipient(s)

Anna Azanon
Lily Caplon-Guin
Daniela Cruz
Manahil Khan
Noel Lofton
Ulises Mata
Madison Oliva
Gianna Pelayo
Alexandra Rochin
Angie Salinas
Anthony Stevens
Nakanlaya Tupsamphan
Ila Youssefi
Alexa Zelaya

Phi Beta Kappa

Recipient(s)

Ever Blaine-Johnson
Arabella Brouwer
Jonah Damian
Hannah Dela Cruz
Cecile Diroll
Karin Funaki
Uma Ganeshan
Kytan Guu
Angelina Hernandez
Spandana Janapati
Lauren Kizer
Emma Krane
Garrett Sakomizu
Adi Shukla
Marah Solloum
Michelle Wang
Alexa Zelaya

Honors Recognition

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Faculty-Mentor(s)	Graduates with Highest Distinction
Mentor: Cathy Lussier	Jennifer Ibarra
Capstone: M-Fit Study 2	
Mentor: Liz Watkins	Roseanne Jeries
Capstone: Perpetuating Stigma: The Teacher's Role in Diagnosing ADHD	
Mentor: Jack Eichler	Angie Lopez
Capstone: Using a Mixed Methods Analysis to Evaluate Higher Order Learning in Large Enrollment Organic Chemistry Courses	
Mentor: John Medearis	Allison Wang
Capstone Title: Local Public Radio Storytelling With 91.9 KVCR News	
Faculty-Mentor(s)	Graduates with High Distinction
Mentor: Matthew Casselman	Akhil Malhotra
Capstone Title: Enhancing Chemistry Education: Analyzing the Impact of 3D Models Using Eye-Tracking Technology	
Mentor: Bruce Link	Karin Funaki
Capstone Title: The Impact of Parasocial Contact on Our Tendency to Stigmatize People with Mental Disorders	
Mentor: Jimmy Calanchini	Mindy Hoang
Capstone Title: Social Perceptions of Fashion	

Honors Recognition

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Faculty-Mentor(s)	Graduates with High Distinction
Mentor: Bruce Link	Emily Manus
Capstone Title: The Latinx Health Paradox: A Facade of Wellness	
Mentor: Wes Sims	Abigail Pellitteri
Capstone Title: An Evaluation of the Preschool Life Skills Curriculum for Students With and Without Disabilities	
Mentor: Erica Heinrich	Taleen Shomar
Capstone Title: Progesterone and Estrogen Influence Baseline Breathing Parameters and Chemoreflexes in Menstruating Women	
Mentor: Christophe Katrib	Nakanlaya Tupsamphan
Capstone Title: Acintey-A9 108B: Siamese Futurism, A Science Fiction Journey Through Thai Beliefs	
Mentor: Nicholas Sheets	Ila Youssefi
Capstone Title: Psychiatric and Substance Use Concerns Treated in U.S. Emergency Departments: A Review of the Samhsa Database	
Mentor: Kalina Michalska	Alexa Zelaya
Capstone Title: Does Proximity to Warehouses Influence Latine Childrens Emotions and Perceptions of Climate Change?	

Study Abroad & Academic Internship Participation

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STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

UC EDUCATION ABROAD PROGRAM: 7

OPPORTUNITIES ABROAD PROGRAM: 8

UC WASHINGTON CENTER (UCDC) PARTICIPANTS

UC CENTER SACRAMENTO (UCCS) PARTICIPANTS



2

F24



1

W25



3

S25



2

Su25



0

F24



0

W25



0

S25



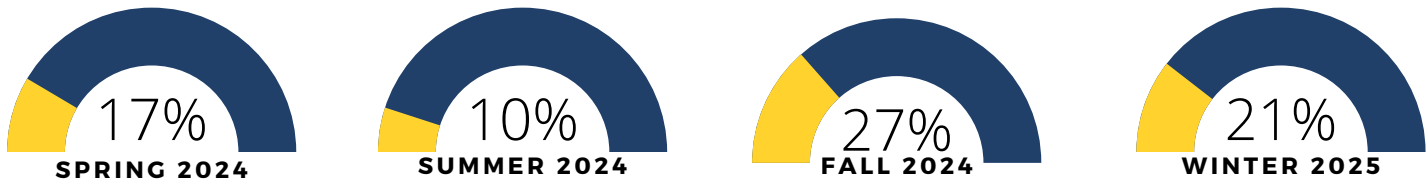
0

Su25

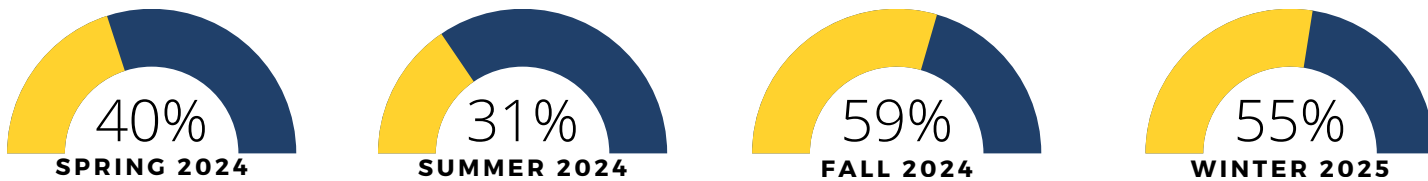
Research, Creative Activity, Scholarly Work



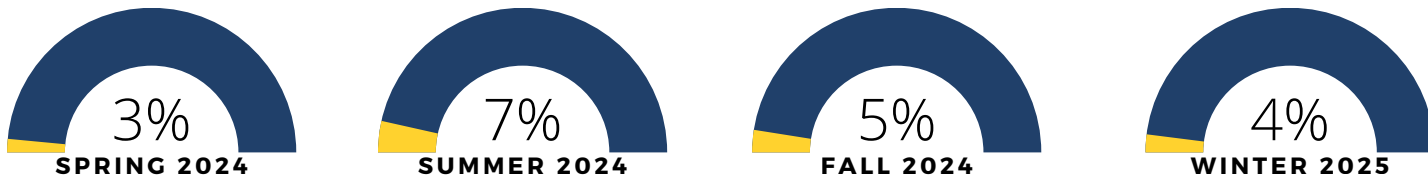
Scholarship Recipient



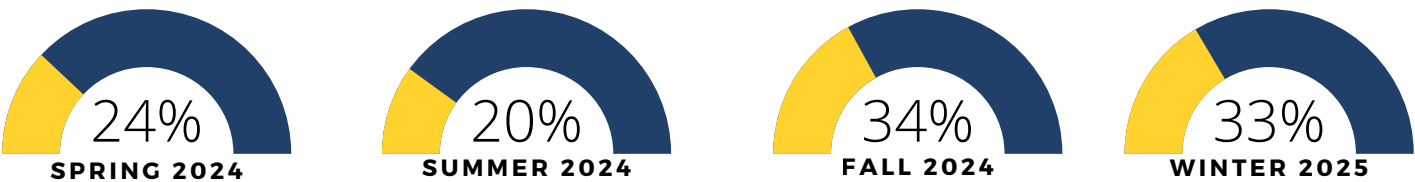
Member of On-Campus or Off-Campus Organization



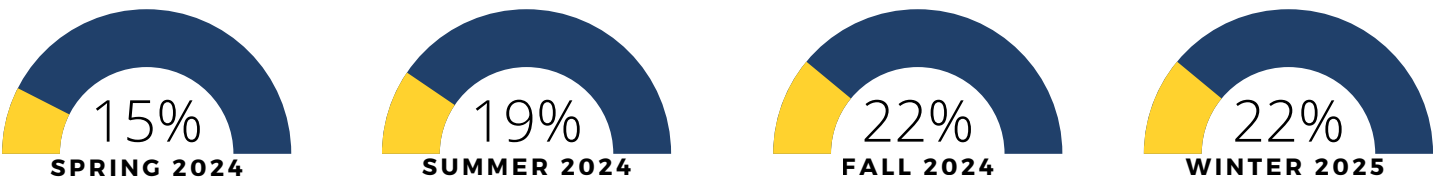
Unpaid Internship



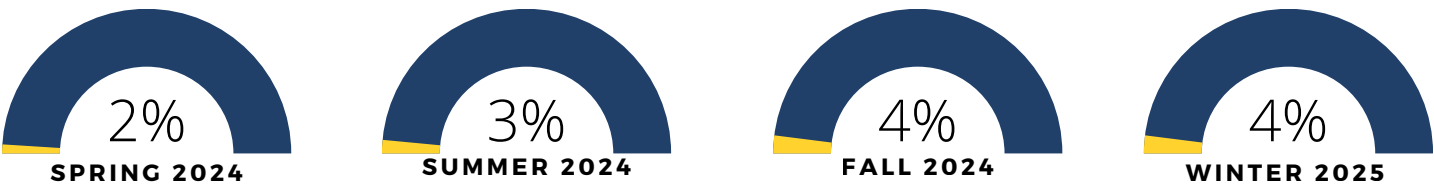
Leader of On-Campus or Off-Campus Organization



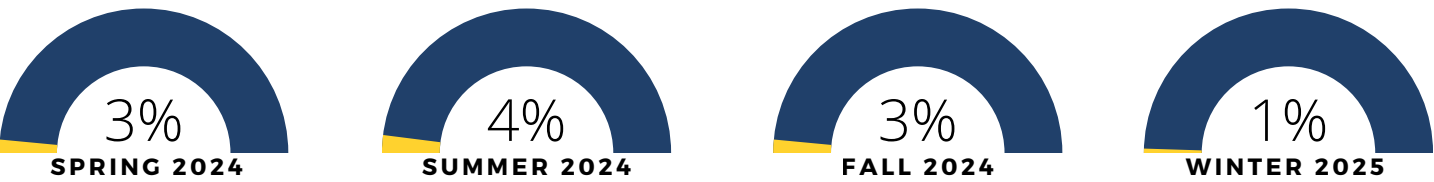
Part-Time Job or Paid Internship



Fellowship Recipient



Presenter at Discipline-Specific Conference



Member of an Honors Society



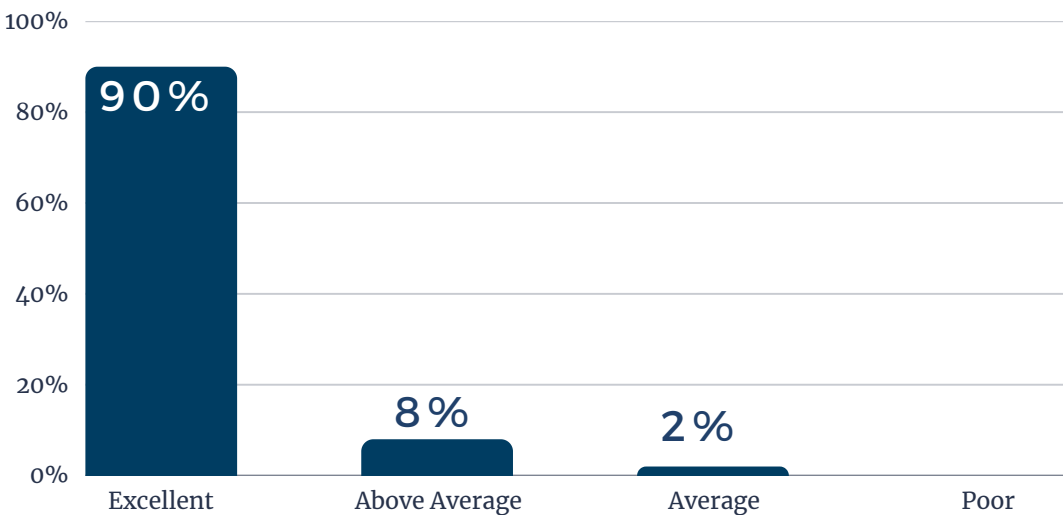
Ambassador Program

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University Honors Ambassadors work with the Honors team to enhance student development through peer mentoring, workshops, and extracurricular activities for Honors students.

Peer-Mentor (Hangout) Evaluations



14

Number of Ambassadors

5

Ambassador Events

108

Hangouts Offered
Students Per Hangout: 2

167

Students Mentored



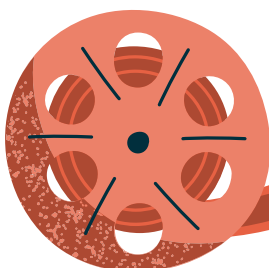
1344

FACEBOOK LIKES



1,967

INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS



12: INSTAGRAM
STORIES POSTED

11: INSTAGRAM FEED
VIDEO POSTS



372

TWITTER FOLLOWERS



400

YOUTUBE SUBSCRIBERS

Graduate Statistics

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University Honors Cording Ceremony



Capstone Project Submissions

0

SUMMER 2024

4

FALL 2024

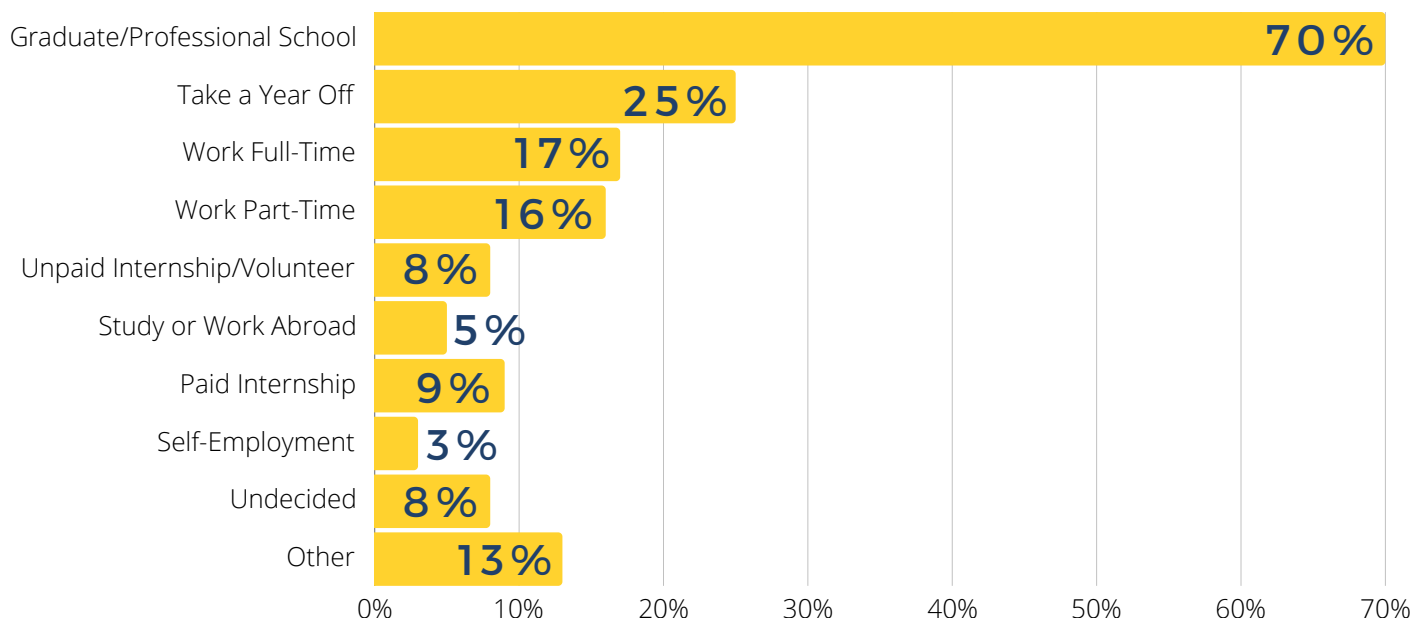
9

WINTER 2025

115

SPRING 2025

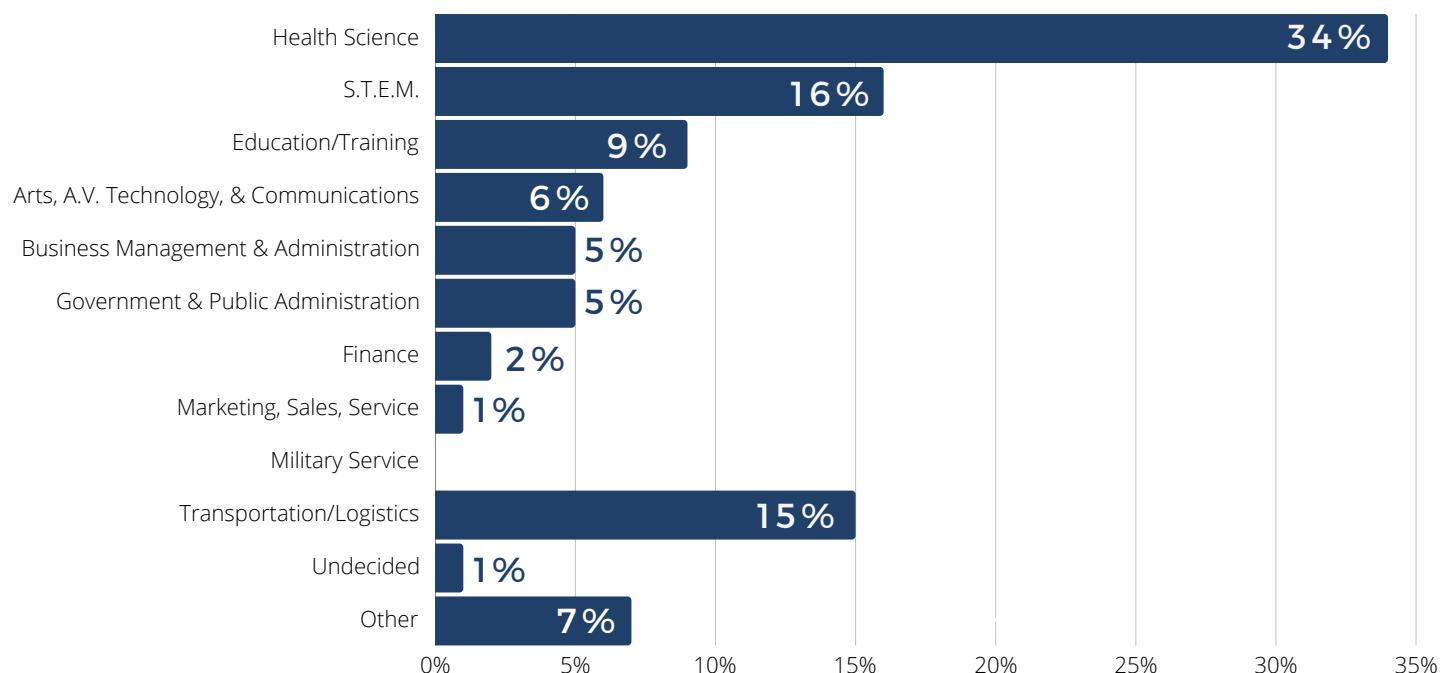
Post-Graduation Plans



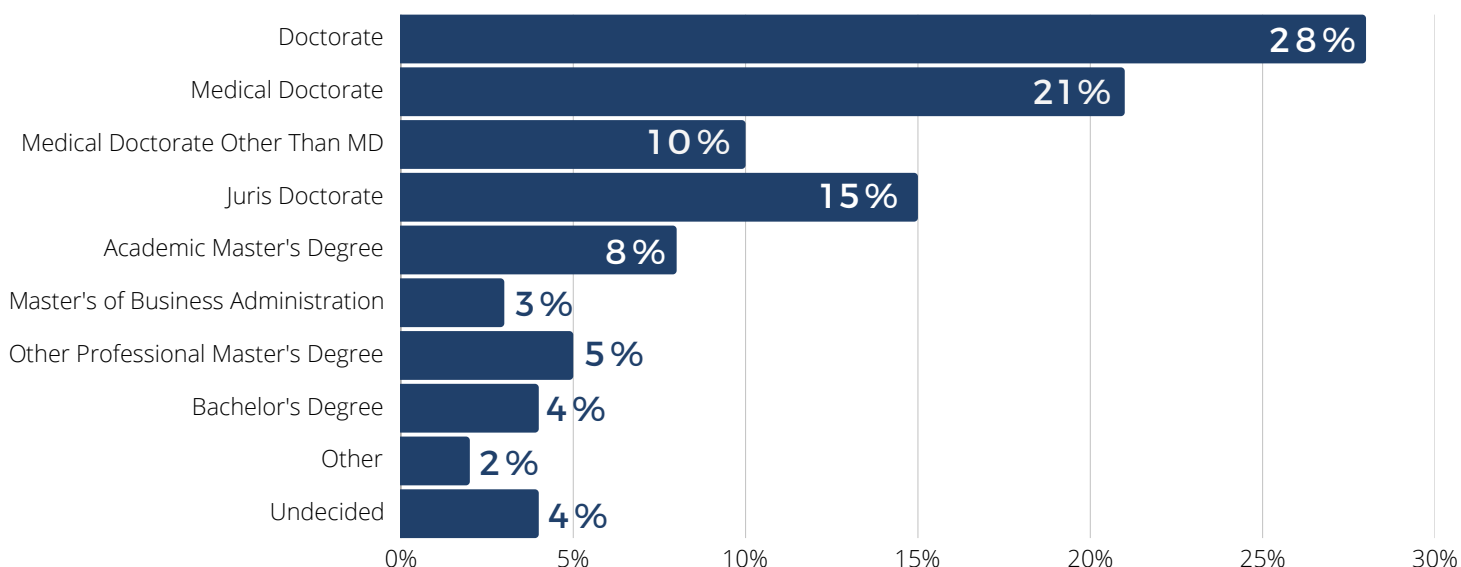
Graduate Statistics

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Career Aspirations



Highest Academic Degree Planned



Student Profiles

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Jennifer Ibarra

2024-2025 University Honors Valedictorian
Education, Society, and Human Development

Jennifer designed and taught a student-led R'Course on Disneyland Imagineering for six quarters, successfully merging storytelling, engineering, and education to make STEM accessible. As the founder of the Dependents and Military Families Organization, she built a supportive community for military-connected students and by teaching English abroad to K-12 foster youth in Mérida, Yucatán. Her research addressed how structured active learning can reduce achievement gaps and promote equity in math instruction for historically marginalized students.

"I will be attending UCR for the Master's in Education and TEP Multiple Subject Credential."



Noel Lofton

2024-2025 Pillars of Excellence Award Recipient
Business Administration

Noelle leveraged her experience as a student parent and returning adult learner to mentor peers and maximize resources. Her Honors Capstone critiqued the outdated 150-hour CPA licensure rule, proposing innovative, competency-based alternatives to widen access to the accounting profession. She volunteered weekly with the Highlander Abroad Advisory Committee (HAAC) and mentored international graduate students through the MBPP Buddy Program. Noel was also a strong ally and advocate for the LGBTQ+ community, by promoting international education and inclusive spaces on campus.

"I will begin working for the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration as a Tax Auditor."



Lance Santana

2024-2025 Pillars of Excellence Award Recipient
Business Administration

Lance established a team to develop an AI chatbot for project managers, teaching an R'Course on Natural Language Processing, and advancing research on conversational agents for chronic disease management. Driven by his experience with a learning disability, he volunteered over 800 hours as an elementary school TA and camp counselor, and actively serving as a peer mentor and advocate on student disability resource panels. He now channels his passion for educational accessibility into pursuing a career in machine learning, dedicated to creating a start-up focused on equitable educational technologies.

"I will be attending UC Berkeley for the Masters in Information Management & Systems."



Allison Wang

2024-2025 Pillars of Excellence Award Recipient
Political Science

Allison interned with KVCR News (NPR) to produce local radio features and teaching an R'Course on public radio storytelling, resulting in student stories being aired to an audience of up to 60,000 weekly listeners. She fostered a strong connection with the Inland Empire community, spotlighting local people and events in her features, and participating in public service internships with the Governor's Office and Representative Takano's D.C. Office. Allison's research focused on pandemic politics in Malawi and African representation in political science research as a member of DPERL.

"I will be attending USC for the Masters in Public Administration (MPA) Program."



Christina Zhu

2024-2025 Pillars of Excellence Award Recipient
Biology

Christina served as the Chief Honors Ambassador for University Honors, where she mentored students, led capstone preparation workshops, and supported the development of the interdisciplinary course "Is Graduate School for Me?". Her research focused on the impact of hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy in newborns at UCSF and drug resistance in cancer, culminating in a publication and a capstone collaboration with the UCR School of Medicine. She celebrates global citizenship by assisting elderly immigrants with translation in Chinatown clinics and by supporting over 150 individuals facing mental health crises as a counselor for the Crisis Text Line.

"I will be taking a gap year, but plan to enroll in a graduate program in the future."



Expenditures

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SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS AWARDED

\$242,420

HOWARD H HAYS RESEARCH FUNDS AWARDED

\$34,600

FACULTY FELLOW STIPENDS

\$32,000

FACULTY FELLOW FIELDTRIPS

\$4,391

COURSE REIMBURSEMENTS

\$80,000

University Honors Team Members

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**BEGOÑA
ECHEVERRIA,
PH.D.**
HOWARD H HAYS, JR.
CHAIR AND FACULTY
DIRECTOR

AARON BUSHONG
ADMINISTRATIVE
DIRECTOR



JANE E. KIM
ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR

LATOYA AMBROSE
SENIOR UNIVERSITY
HONORS COUNSELOR



MAYRA JONES
UNIVERSITY HONORS
COUNSELOR

MARIA ROSA
UNIVERSITY HONORS
COUNSELOR



JOVAN SMITH
UNIVERSITY HONORS
DATA & ENROLLMENT
SPECIALIST

KRISTINE PARADA
UNIVERSITY HONORS
OFFICE COORDINATOR



900 UNIVERSITY AVENUE
381 SKYE HALL
RIVERSIDE, CA 92521

[HONORS.UCR.EDU](https://honors.ucr.edu)

Giving

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UCR Give Day 2025

UCR Give Day Leading Project Page: University Honors

4

Challenges Won

70

Total Donors

\$6,035

Total Raised

GIVE

VOLUNTEER

Contributions will be used to enhance the services provided to our students, helping us continue to create legacies of student success. Consider giving back to University Honors by being a featured speaker, career mentor, or other such collaborative engagement.