

Dream Big



From Union College to your dream school,

get there with

American[🔥]**Honors**

An American Honors graduate from Union, NJ celebrates with the College mascot "Hoot" at our May Commencement

550+

Union College students have been enrolled in the American Honors Program

40+

Honors classes offered in 30 different programs of study

3.62

Average GPA of current American Honors students

American^{flame}**Honors**
at Union College



@Union_Honors
#UnionHonors



American Honors is a program for high-achieving, academically motivated students who attend and graduate from Union College and then transfer to a four-year institution.

Students in this program enroll in a Union degree

program and take honors courses to fulfill their general education and program requirements. Honors classes are limited to 20 students and are taught by dedicated faculty who emphasize critical thinking, analytical writing, and effective communication. Students who take these classes are exceptionally well prepared to transfer to four-year colleges and universities, to earn scholarships, and to be successful at their transfer institutions.

American Honors students receive personalized advising and wrap-around professional support to ensure their success in the classroom and in the Union College community. Students in the American Honors program are engaged with a community of scholars. They collaborate daily with similarly focused peers in the Honors Lounge, at American Honors events, and on projects in and out of the classroom. American Honors students serve as leaders of on-campus organizations, including the Academic Learning Center, Phi Theta Kappa, and the Student Government Association. They frequently take advantage of research opportunities with faculty and staff. This engagement helps students build strong resumes and competitive applications when they apply to transfer institutions. Many American Honors students have received scholarships, including the highly selective Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship, to support their studies.

For more information, visit www.ucc.edu/honors or contact an American Honors Admissions Officer at honors@ucc.edu





ACADEMICS

Honors classes are small, seminar style classes that promote student engagement. Classes are limited to 20 students and are taught by Union's most distinguished faculty. Honors classes focus on a learner centered pedagogy, enhancing critical thinking and inquiry.

Students are invited to present their work at an Honors Symposium held each Fall.



COMMUNITY

The Honors Lounge serves as the center of the Honors program. Students meet here for study sessions, game nights, meetings, and events.

Workshops, social events, alumni transfer panels, and faculty meet and greets are just a few ways that students can build relationships with faculty and peers.



ADVISING

Honors students have a dedicated academic specialist who provides personalized advisement and helps support their success. The academic specialist guides these students with registration through graduation, campus resources, and transfer.



TRANSFER

Graduates of the American Honors program at Union College have transferred to top schools, including Columbia, Cornell, Princeton, Dartmouth, Rutgers, and Georgetown. These students receive significant support when applying to colleges and universities.

MEET THE
AMERICAN
HONORS
FACULTY



We are proud to introduce
our distinguished faculty:

AmericanHonors

www.ucc.edu/honors

AmericanHonors



Dr. Valerae Hurley

Dr. Valerae Hurley earned a PhD in Modern History and Literature from Drew University in 2001. She holds three additional degrees, a MPhil from Drew, a MA in History, and a BA in Fine Arts from Monmouth University. She was the 2014 recipient of the John & Suanne Roueche League of Innovation Excellence Award and the 2012 Student Government Recognition Award. Her latest publication entitled, *Hawking Vengeance: Reading the French Revolutionary Press*, was published by Edinburgh University Press in April of 2020. She is currently working on another project which will be entitled *The Woke Crowd in the French Revolution*.

Dr. Hurley's classes include Introduction to Western Civilization I and II, Classical Greece and Rome, and Twentieth Century Europe. Her approach to teaching honors classes includes projects that compel students to research controversial topics while also encouraging critical thinking skills when arguing or presenting their findings. American Honors students are well prepared for this approach; indeed, many report that they find it both interesting and informative. Dr. Hurley gets great satisfaction from observing the individual intellectual growth that this exercise fosters in her students.



Dr. Len Anyanwu

Dr. Len Anyanwu earned a PhD in Economics from the University of Texas at Dallas and holds a MA in Economics and a BA in Government from the same university. Dr. Anyanwu joined Union College in 1999 and is currently Senior Professor of Economics in the Social Sciences, Business, and History Division. Prior to that he worked at the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) as a Research Professor in the



School of Industrial Management and consulted for the Economic Directorate of NATO, Educational Testing Service (ETS), and other corporate and public organizations. His scholarship includes work in the areas of technological change, competitiveness, and globalization. He has published extensively including most recently: "An All-inclusive Political Campaign Process Can Produce Sound Economic Policy," published in the African Council on Global Affairs online (2019); "Reversal of the Land Use-fee Policy by Lagos State is the Right Thing to Do"; and Op-Ed, in the Global Institute of Financial Economists online (2018).

Dr. Anyanwu teaches Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, International Economics, Money & Banking, and Business Organization & Management. In his honors courses, Dr. Anyanwu strives to create an environment where students are active learners, think through real-world issues, and conduct evidence-based scholarship. Dr. Anyanwu has experienced great success triggering students' interests and motivation to learn by showing them how closely economics is related to the real world. He is pleased and driven by student feedback that feeds his passion for both research and teaching in this applied approach.



Assistant Professor
Larry Kwon

Assistant Professor Larry Kwon earned a BS in Aviation Technology Maintenance from Vaughn College in New York and a master's degree in Mathematics Education at Columbia University where he continues to pursue an EdD in Mathematics Education. During college, he discovered that mathematics is connected to every discipline and was inspired to become a mathematics teacher. He presented "New technology of students' assessment and its positive outcomes" at the 2017 Faculty Showcase hosted by NJEdge focusing on how well-prepared learning objects and the learning management system can be used both inside and outside the classroom to promote student engagement and learning.

Professor Kwon teaches a wide range of mathematics courses from Remedial Mathematics to Differential Equations at Union College. He uses active learning instructional strategies to promote student engagement by incorporating videos and mathematical modeling research projects. His educational background and diverse teaching experiences help American Honors students better connect mathematics to different industries.



Dr. Michele Rotunda

Dr. Michele Rotunda earned her MA in History from the Rutgers-Newark/NJIT Federated Program and her PhD in History from Rutgers University. She is the Faculty Coordinator for the American Honors program and serves as an advisor to the History Club. She was selected as a 2015-16 Fellow at the Metropolitan Colleges Institute for Teaching Improvement (MetroCITI) at Teachers College, Columbia University. She won the New Jersey Studies Academic Alliance Teaching Award in 2014 and the Neblett Award for Educational Excellence in Teaching & Learning in 2016. Her book, *A Drunkard's Defense: Alcohol, Murder, and Medical Jurisprudence in Nineteenth Century America*, was published in 2021.

Dr. Rotunda teaches History and Government classes including U.S. History, Women in American History, and American Government and Politics. She encourages students to engage in disciplinary thinking through various active learning projects that might ask students to analyze the results of an election or consider how to present history to the public. She enjoys being a part of American Honors and looks forward to challenging and being challenged by her students every day.



Associate Professor of Chemistry Sherry Heidary (center) surrounded by the students of her General Chemistry class



Associate Professor Sherry Heidary began working at Union College in 2007. She holds a BS in Polymer Engineering and a MS in Polymer Science from Penn State University. She has held several leadership positions at the college including serving as the Faculty Advisor to the Student Government Association, Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society, and the American Honors Council. She is currently a Commissioner on the Union County Commission on the Status of Women and a Trustee on the Union County College Foundation Board. She is the first recipient of the prestigious Fiat Lux Award in 2017 and two-time recipient of the Neblett Award for Educational Excellence in Teaching and Learning. In 2015, she was awarded the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) Excellence Award in Teaching, Learning, and Leadership at Community and Technical Colleges.

Professor Heidary's interest in STEM courses was nurtured by her chemistry high school teacher. She finds STEM courses interesting, challenging, and very exciting. She teaches honors sections of the General Chemistry I and College Success courses.



*Associate Professor
Marc Postiglione*

Associate Professor Marc Postiglione serves in the Social Sciences, Business and History Division where he works with our Sport Management students. He has a BA from Long Island University and a MA from St. Joseph Seminary and College. Professor Postiglione has served on many college wide governance committees, including Strategic Planning and Curriculum, and as Chair of the Governance and Leadership Council. He is the Head Golf Coach at the College and has been working with the Golf Team since 2002. Professor Postiglione volunteers to coach basketball and golf at his children's school, Koinonia Academy in Plainfield. He also volunteers at St. Anne's Church in Garwood as the Coordinator of the Church's Confirmation Program.

Professor Postiglione teaches a wide variety of Sport Management classes including Introduction to Sport Management, Evolution of American Sports, Sport & Law, Sports and Society, and Current Issues in Sports. He also teaches philosophy classes including Ethics and an honors section of Introduction to Philosophy. Professor Postiglione enjoys working individually with his students to help them achieve their personal, educational, and career goals.



Dr. Rama Lohani-Chase

Dr. Rama Lohani-Chase is a faculty member in the Social Sciences, Business, and History Division. An interdisciplinary teacher-scholar, she received her PhD in Women's and Gender Studies with concentrations in Sociology and Anthropology from Rutgers University-New Brunswick, and has researched and published on the topics of social movements, gender and sexuality, and socio-cultural

issues. Among her various contributions at Union College, she serves as an advisor to the college's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa. She is also a recipient of the 2018 John and Suanne Roueche Excellence Award from the League for Innovation in the Community.

Dr. Lohani-Chase teaches sociology courses such as the Principles of Sociology, Social Problems, Gender and Work, Minorities in American Life, and Marriage and the Family. In her American Honors courses, she encourages inquiry-based discussion and collaborative learning in the belief that an environment in which students learn from and appreciate each other is conducive to growth.



*Associate Professor
Nick Gilbert*

Associate Professor Nick Gilbert has a B.S. from the City College of New York and a M.S. from the City College of New York and has worked at the college for more than 26 years. He was recently chosen by American Honors students to be the speaker at the annual Honors Induction ceremony.

Professor Gilbert teaches various physics and electrical engineering courses including General Physics, Mechanics, Principles of Electrical Engineering, and Electricity and Magnetism. He constantly reminds his students to keep their dream organic, by letting them know, "When I was your age my dream did not include standing in front of you!! But by the grace of the Master Engineer here I am and I couldn't be happier."



Dr. Mandana Ahsani

Dr. Mandana Ahsani is a Senior Professor of Psychology. Dr. Ahsani has a BS in Psychology from National University of Iran, a MEd in Computer Assisted Instruction from the University of Illinois, and a MA and PhD in Cognitive/Experimental Psychology from Rutgers University. She is the Chair of the Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee, the Co-chair of the Professional Development Committee, and advisor to Psi Beta and the Psychology Club. Dr. Ahsani was the Co-chair of the Middle States Accreditation Study and a former advisor for Iota Xi chapter of Phi Theta Kappa international honor society. She is the winner of the 2011 Paragon Award for New

Advisors from the Phi Theta Kappa International Headquarters and the recipient of the Neblett Award for Educational Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Dr Ahsani's classes include General Psychology, Child Psychology, Lifespan Development, Social Psychology, and Social Research Methods. Her honors classes are seminar based and encourage critical thinking, problem solving, and communicating through research, presentations, and group projects. Honors students find this approach challenging, yet stimulating, and are ultimately well-prepared for their future academic and career endeavors.



*Dr. Vincent Wrice advising students in his
Computer Program Fundamentals course*



Dr. Vincent Wrice is a Senior Professor of Computer Science and Information Systems at Union College as well as a systems analyst and project manager with over 30 years of experience in Information Technology. He holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Computer and Information Systems. He also earned a Juris Doctor degree from Rutgers School of Law in Newark. Dr. Wrice has extensive multimedia experience providing consulting services in new media, web development, networking, desktop publishing and training. He has consulted with various municipalities and school systems in New Jersey.

At the college, Dr. Wrice works in the STEM Division teaching programming courses in JAVA and Python as well as Cyber Law and Ethics, Data Structures and Database Management. He has advised student research on queuing theory and the campus's One Stop service center; a college rating and index system, and course and room scheduling on campus.



Dr. Phillip Papas

Dr. Phillip Papas is a Senior Professor of History in the Social Sciences, Business, and History Division at Union College. He earned his BA (History/Political Science) and MA (History) from Hunter College-CUNY, MPhil (History) and PhD (History) from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. In addition to journal and newspaper articles, book reviews, and blog posts, Dr. Papas has authored *That Ever Loyal Island: Staten Island and the American Revolution* (2007), *Renegade Revolutionary: The Life of General Charles Lee* (2014), which earned several awards, and co-authored *Port Richmond* (2009). He has also been featured in the

documentary film *Loyalty & Rebellion* (2019) which was inspired by his book *That Ever Loyal Island*.

Dr. Papas enjoys teaching in the American Honors Program and challenging his students to appreciate the history of their communities and to think critically about the past. He encourages students to visit museums, historical sites, and on-line exhibits and to ask questions about the way these platforms present history. Dr. Papas fosters a learning environment that opens students to new research and experiences, makes them comfortable critiquing how history is taught and presented to the public, and helps them develop the skills necessary to become successful in their professional careers and as members of society.



Dr. Mary Meeks

Dr. Mary Meeks has a PhD in Modern History and Literature from Drew University and a BA in Psychology from Brooklyn College. She is a Brontë scholar with an interest in the intersections of life and literature. She joined the faculty at Union College in January 2007 and enjoys learning in various disciplines. Dr. Meeks is also energized by College Life activities outside the classroom. She has served as an advisor to multiple clubs and believes that campus involvement is important to student success. She is a 2019 recipient of the Neblett Prize for Educational Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Dr. Meeks enjoys teaching honors classes because the students are willing to go the extra mile to delve deeper into the analysis of literature, thus keeping her on her toes. She finds that the students in the American Honors Program tend to be particularly hard-working and creative, which is inspiring. Her students comment on her caring approach to supporting their learning.



*Dr. Vikul Rajpara explaining molecular concepts to his
General Chemistry II Honors students*



Dr. Vikul Rajpara is an assistant professor of Chemistry at Union College. He completed his Bachelor's in Chemistry at South Gujarat University, and his Master's in Organic Chemistry and Doctorate in Materials Chemistry at the University of South Dakota. Dr. Rajpara is a recipient of the Dr. Neblett Prize for Educational Excellence in Teaching. He is also the recipient of a Gold Lapel pin from the President for his dedication to students and the college. Dr. Rajpara is very involved in American Honors events and college wide activities.

Dr. Rajpara teaches various chemistry courses including honors sections of General Chemistry. He incorporates various group projects in his honors course with a focus on developing critical thinking and problem solving skills in students. As part of the honors project, students are required to prepare a video explaining a concept or experiment. Additionally, Dr. Rajpara conducts research with students related to the development of environment friendly catalysts for organic reactions.



Assistant Professor
Roberto Carlos Garcia

Assistant Professor Roberto Carlos Garcia earned an MFA in Poetry and Poetry in Translation from Drew University. He holds two additional degrees; a BA in English from Kean University and an AS in Liberal Arts from Union County College. Professor García has published several poems, short stories, and essays, both online and in print. He has participated in countless poetry readings and has been featured at the Dodge Poetry Festival, the Bryant Park Reading Room, and the Brooklyn Museum. His published poetry collections are *Melancolía* and *Black/Maybe: An Afro Lyric*.

Professor García's classes include Introduction to Literature, Contemporary Literature, and Latinx Literature Studies. He is committed to teaching students the ways literature is relevant to their daily lives and that there are books out there written just for them.



Dr. Marie C. Montes-Matias

Dr. Marie C. Montes-Matias holds a BS in Industrial Microbiology from the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus and a PhD in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics from Rutgers University, New Brunswick. Her area of expertise is environmental microbiology, and her thesis was focused on the analysis of novel enzymes involved in the metabolism of hydrocarbons. Her research interests are in the area of environmental and industrial microbiology with molecular biology and biotechnology applications. She is very passionate about teaching and received the 2018 John and Suanne Roueche Excellence

Award from the League for Innovation in the Community College. She also enjoys working with student organizations and currently serves as co-advisor to the college's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa.

Dr. Montes-Matias teaches General Biology I and II, Microbiology and Introduction to Biology. As a mentor of research projects for STEM majors, she is actively involved in promoting undergraduate research at Union College. She enjoys teaching honors courses because they offer her the opportunity to provide students with course research-based experiences while fostering scientific reasoning and critical thinking in the classroom.



Dr. Khan empowers his Organic Chemistry students to seek logical answers to complicated questions



Dr. Mushtaq Khan earned his three post baccalaureate degrees in chemistry (PhD, MPhil, and MSc) from Aligarh Muslim University, India in 1986, 1983 and 1981. He worked as a chemistry instructor at Wesley College, Hyderabad, India for two years and then came to the United States in 1989 to work as a post- doctoral research associate at South Dakota State University. He worked at Ferris State University and Oklahoma State University before coming to Union College in 1993. His research work involves isolation, identification, and synthesis of natural products, and he has published several research papers in peer reviewed journals.

Dr. Khan teaches Organic Chemistry I and II in the American Honors program. Organic chemistry is a tough subject for the majority of students, but Dr. Khan encourages students to first understand the fundamental concepts, apply logic and critical thinking, and then explain how and why organic reactions occur. His approach to teaching organic chemistry includes group presentations, a research paper, and poster presentations. Dr. Khan's goal is to prepare his students to shake off their initial jitters and get ready to confidently and logically solve organic chemistry problems. His American Honors Students consistently perform well above the national average on the national exam developed by the American Chemical Society.



Dr. Karen Zielony earned a PhD in Applied Linguistics, with a specialization in Composition Theory and Rhetoric, from New York University in 1996. She also holds a MA from NYU in English Education and a BA, Magna Cum Laude, in English Literature from Queens College, CUNY. Her doctoral dissertation focused on cultural difference in rhetoric as seen through composing processes in writing. Dr. Zielony taught writing courses at NYU including an undergraduate teacher-training class and a graduate course in socio-linguistics. She taught undergraduate English writing classes at Ben Gurion University in Israel, where she also taught training courses to teachers of English working in the Arab sector and a writing course for graduate students writing their doctoral dissertation in varied disciplines at the university. Dr. Zielony also worked in the business sector, writing technical instructional manuals for an international software engineering company in computer-aided graphic design, with offices in Tel Aviv, Israel and Palo Alto, CA.

Dr. Zielony began teaching at Union College in 2004. Her courses currently include English 101 and English 102, and a 200-level course in Literature and the Arts in the Twentieth Century. Dr. Zielony's classes are highly student-centered, as she views and values the writing and learning process as rather idiosyncratic and individual for each student.



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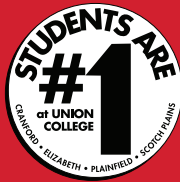
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