

Honors Experiential Learning Courses

We know that experience can often be the best teacher, so Honors Experiential Learning courses offer upper-level honors seminar credit for substantial activities that go beyond classroom learning. They seek to capture through critical reflection the learning that happens in internship, leadership, service learning, study abroad/away, and undergraduate research and creative activity experiences.

What experiences count for experiential learning credit, and what is the time commitment?

Students can register for 0-3 credits in the following categories:

- **Internship:** A supervised work experience designed to strengthen the student's technical competencies and fundamental knowledge in a professional field. 40 hours per credit.
- **Service Learning:** A supervised service learning project that applies the student's academic training and knowledge to address community challenges. 20 hours per credit hour.
- **Undergraduate Research/Creative Activity:** A supervised undergraduate research or creative project in which the student practices professional research expectations, methods, and distribution/presentation. 20 hours per credit hour.
- **Study Abroad/Away:** An immersive experience occurring regionally, nationally, or internationally that develops intercultural competencies and an understanding of the student's own culture in a global context. One week (7 nights) per credit hour.
- **Leadership:** A leadership experience where the student provides direction, management, and oversight of the people and processes in an organization. 1 year of committed service, with the course taken in the second semester for 3 credit hours (dependent on the nature of the leadership role).

How are these courses assessed?

Students develop a semester plan with their immediate supervisors and write thorough weekly reflections throughout the semester. These reflections should not be reports of tasks completed, but engaged, critical commentaries on what the student learns throughout the experience and how that learning affects the student's academic, professional, and personal goals.

At the end of the semester, students create a new module in their honors learning portfolio that includes all weekly reflections, as well as a final, cumulative reflection that addresses how the experience fulfills UTC Honors College learning outcomes:

- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Creative and Research Activities
- Communication

- Collaboration
- Community Understanding
- Cultivated Professionalism.

When applicable, students should also include examples of projects, deliverables, presentations, photographs, etc. undertaken during their experience in their Honors Experiential Learning module in their learning portfolio. The course is graded Satisfactory/No Credit.

How do I know whether an experience will count? What limitations are there?

You may not receive honors experiential learning credit for any activity that is already credit-bearing in another department. Study abroad/away is the exception; because students are often taking college courses at other universities, this credit captures all the valuable learning that happens outside of the classroom when you're in a new environment.

You may not receive credit for independent studies with professors—those should be registered as Independent Study courses in the relevant department.

While you *may* receive credit for paid experiences, they should contribute in some way to your overall professional and/or personal aspirations.

How do I apply?

First, discuss with your honors advisor how experiential learning courses fit into your overall academic plan. When you're ready, complete an application for the section of the course that best matches your activity.

Email your completed application to Dr. Jayda Coons (jayda-coons@utc.edu) by your priority registration period for the following semester. If your application is accepted, you will receive an email notification and an override for the course section.

If you have any questions, please contact the course coordinator, Dr. Jayda Coons (jayda-coons@utc.edu).