Touro Law Center Honors Program: Student Guide & Application Packet

KEY FEATURES OF THE HONORS PROGRAM

- Participation in honors sections for an enriched course
- Priority in registration for American Trial Courts or the judicial clerkship externship
- Invitations to stimulating and engaging activities within a community of student-scholars
- Designation as an Honors Scholar, with appropriate notation on transcript and resume, and at commencement ceremony
- Inclusion in faculty colloquia and other faculty scholarly pursuits

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS

Application Materials and Process

Students who wish to apply to the Honors Program must submit an application packet containing the following materials:

(a) Cover letter;
(b) Resume; and
(c) Completed Honors Program Application, with essays, available via the TWEN Page “Touro Law Honors Program – 2015 Applications.”

In your cover letter, please be sure to address why you wish to be a part of the Honors Program. Bring up also points about yourself that the Honors Program Committee would not necessarily learn from reading your resume and transcript. For further information about the cover letter and essays, consult the TWEN page materials.


Applicants may be asked to interview – in person or on the telephone – with members of the Honors Program Committee.

Selection Criteria

Selection for the Honors Program will be based on the following four criteria:

(a) Demonstrated academic achievement;
(b) Strong communication skills, both written and oral;
(c) Evidence of intellectual curiosity and engagement; and
(d) Motivation to participate in a challenging and rigorous academic experience.

Admission to the Honors Program

The Honors Program Committee will consider each student application to the Program using the selection criteria listed above.

The Committee may issue conditional invitations to join the Honors Program as early as May 2015, subject to confirmation once all spring grades have been received. Rolling admissions will continue throughout the summer until the program has been filled.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM BENEFITS

Student-scholars receive the following benefits:

- Eligibility to compete in, serve on, and receive credit for both Law Review and the Moot Court Board*
- Additional advising regarding curricular planning, clerkships and job placement
- Assistance in securing opportunities to serve as a research or teaching assistant

* Subject to the approval of the Chair of the Honors Program Committee and the respective Editors-in-Chief.
INTRODUCTION

The Touro Law Center Honors Program offers approximately twenty to twenty-five exceptional students per class year an enriched comprehensive law school experience. Students in the Honors Program will participate in enhanced academic, experiential, and social opportunities as part of a community of student-scholars.

Both full- and part-time students who have completed their first year at Touro Law Center at the end of the Spring 2015 semester are eligible to participate. Students who are selected for the Honors Program for 2015-2016 will continue in the Program until their graduation from the Touro Law Center, provided they continue to meet the selection criteria.

This guide provides an overview of this exciting program, including information regarding program structure, selection criteria, and the application and admissions process.

ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES

During the course of their education at the Touro Law Center, student-scholars will participate in the educational opportunities of an enriched course: the integrated course (FT students) or honors seminar (PT students). (Students facing exceptional circumstances may petition the Committee for a waiver of the requirements to take the enriched course offered within their division.)

Student-scholars may take advantage of the academic opportunities described below. Participation in any one component does not forfeit the opportunity to enroll in any of the other curricular options.

Integrated Course: Honors Trust and Estates with Module

In each academic year, the Honors Program will offer an honors section of a course that integrates two existing upper-level courses. This enriched integrated course provides student-scholars the opportunity to engage with some of the doctrinal and theoretical components of the curriculum in an advanced and accelerated environment. This opportunity may also allow students to fulfill upper-level curricular requirements in fewer credit hours by integrating synergistic subject areas, affording earlier access to advanced upper-level elective courses, seminars, and clinics.

Full-time student scholars will be required to take Honors Trust and Estates with Module during the Spring 2016 semester. This unique four-credit course taught by Professor Rena Seplowitz fulfills the upper-level curricular requirements of Trusts and Estates and an intermediate skills course.

Judicial Clerkship Externship and American Trial Courts*

Provided that they have met all prerequisites, student-scholars will be given preference for the judicial clerkship externship as early as their fourth full semester at the Touro Law Center or when they become eligible, if earlier.

Participating in the judicial externship clinic will allow student-scholars the opportunity to hone advanced writing, research, and analytical skills, while building a relationship with some of the top minds in the legal community.

In addition, students will be given preference for American Trial Courts (ATC). Each ATC course requires students to spend approximately four weeks completing a rotation through each of three practice areas. Students are required to attend court sessions and to actively participate in a three-hour weekly seminar. For a more detailed description of these courses, please see the Course Descriptions document on the Student Resources website.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Each semester, the Honors Program will designate events or activities aimed to bring student-scholars together with one another, faculty, judges, or practicing attorneys.

Honors Program students are required to attend intellectual and social activities, special receptions, and networking events throughout the year. Students select the events they wish to attend and self-report attendance (four events per semester for FT students; reduced for PT students).

The Honors Program has two other requirements. Each Honors Program Scholar must submit one short writing about one of the events attended each semester. Second, there is a service requirement: Honors Program students must work on a special pro bono project associated with organizations in Touro’s Public Advocacy Center.

A CLASS OF THEIR OWN

Congratulations to the twenty-nine Honors Program scholars who celebrated their graduation from Touro Law Center in May 2014!

We celebrate the achievements of all our Honors Program graduates. We are especially proud that more than half of the Honors Program graduates received scholastic honors at commencement.

Congratulations to Honors Program Graduates:
- FT valedictorian Paul Lipsky
- FT salutatorian Francesca Brancato
- PT salutatorian Jacqueline Laquinta

* Honors Program students have a registration preference only with respect to students of their same year. Thus, a 2L Honors Program students does not have a preference with respect to 3L students in registering for an externship.