Honors Concentration within the MCB major

Fall 2015 Informational Meeting
MCB Honors Concentration

- Overview/Benefits
- Who Can Apply?
- Requirements for Admission
- Requirements for Completion
- Requirements for Retention
- Overlap with James Scholars Program
- Application and Admission Process
Benefits of Honors

- Designed for students considering professional or graduate school
- More interaction with faculty
- More contact with and exploration of material
- Cohort of honors students
- Smaller class size
Who Can Apply? – changing your major

- The MCB Honors Concentration is a sub-category of the MCB major. You cannot be in MCB Honors and remain a Biochemistry or IB major, nor can MCB Honors be a double major with Biochem or IB.

- Biology (undecided) and MCB majors will be switched to MCB Honors once accepted—no additional steps are needed.

- Other majors must meet declaration criteria for MCB in addition to being accepted to MCB Honors and then must change their major to MCB Honors. Students outside of the College of LAS must also meet all requirements for ICT to LAS.

- Double majors/Dual degrees must make MCB Honors their primary major.
Who Can Apply? – coursework needed

- Ideally, you should have **completed** or be **enrolled** in MCB 150 **on this campus** in order to apply to the Honors Concentration.

- Transfer or proficiency credit for MCB 150 is allowed; however, AP credit will **not** be accepted as a substitute for MCB 150 for **non**-Biology majors.

- Grade in **MCB 150 must be B+ or better**.

- Grade in at least one Chemistry Lecture course must be B+ or better.
Who Can Apply? – year in school

- Freshmen should apply in the Spring semester:
  - Apply in Spring semester if planning to take MCB 250/251 in the Fall of your sophomore year (typical timeline).
  - Freshmen planning to take MCB 250/251 in the Spring may also apply in Spring (offset timeline).

- Sophomores and Transfer students: Apply as soon as possible, preferably before (typical timeline) or while (offset timeline) taking MCB 250/251.
It may be possible to apply while taking later courses in the Core, but it will depend on the student’s ability to fit in all required coursework. Please see Honors Coordinator for your special circumstances.

Under some circumstances, students may be allowed to substitute Advanced Honors Coursework for missing the honors section in either MCB 250 or 251, but not both—preferred is offset completion of the honors discussions.
Evidence of appropriate preparation for the MCB honors concentration *typically* includes:

- ACT score of 29 or higher
- Average cumulative GPA in University of Illinois mathematics and science courses of 3.5 or higher
- B+ or better in MCB 150
- B or better in any CHEM courses completed
- Motivation for honors work—determined via history, application essays, interview, etc.

Application and letter of recommendation required
Fulfill all requirements of the standard MCB Major

Complete Honors sections in all* MCB Core Courses

- Lecture Courses (250, 252, 354) have Honors Discussion sections (MCB 297). Earn 3 hrs Honors credit (AH, B+H, etc.) for course and 1 hr Honors credit for discussion.

- Lab Courses (251, 253) have Honors Lab sections and Honors Lab Discussion (MCB 298). Earn 2 hrs Honors credit for lab and 1 hr Honors credit for discussion.

* Substitutions may be allowed for either 250 or 251
Requirements for Completion

Typical Timeline:
Take the following courses paired together:
- MCB 250 with 297A and MCB 251 with 298A preferably in same semester
- MCB 252 with 297B and MCB 253 with 298B preferably in same semester
- MCB 354 with 297C

OffsetTimeline:
Take the following courses paired together:
- MCB 252 with 297A and MCB 253 with 298A
- MCB 354 with 297B and 298B alone
- 297C alone

Other combinations are possible, but 297 A, B, and C must be taken in order and 298 A and B must be taken in order.
Requirements for Completion

Advanced Honors Courses (choose 4 or more)

- **One** additional 3-5 hour advanced MCB course from the Approved List of Advanced Courses for MCB Majors;
- Honors Project in **one** advanced MCB course from the Approved List of Advanced Courses for MCB Majors;
- MCB 290: Individual Topics (Undergraduate Research): must be taken for a minimum of 2 credit hours;
- MCB 492: Senior Thesis (may be applied to graduation with distinction);

Continued…
Requirements for Completion

Advanced Honors Courses (continued)

• MCB 493: Special Topics in Molecular and Cellular Biology (only certain sections apply);
• LAS 299: Study Abroad in MCB-approved discipline-specific programs only.
• Advanced Discussion Section in approved Advanced MCB Course (see Honors Advisor for list of courses approved for Honors credit)
• Approved Supplemental Advanced Course outside of MCB (see Honors advisor for a list of courses approved in this category).

Students must consult the Honors coordinator about the Advanced honors options. Students must chose from a minimum of three different categories above and may repeat only MCB 290 and MCB 493. Other restrictions may apply and other courses/options may be added to this list over time.
Overlap with James Scholars
(Consult LAS JS office as changes have been made)

Honors sections in MCB Core

- Honors completion in MCB 250/251/252/253/354 all count for James Scholar credit
- MCB 297 and 298 count towards total Honors hours earned

Advanced Honors Courses

- Honors Project or Section (completed as an HCLA) in an advanced MCB course from the Approved List—counts for JS credit
- MCB 492: Senior Thesis—counts as your JS course for that semester, but does not count towards Honors (“H”) hours
To maintain good standing in the MCB Honors Concentration, students must do the following:

- Maintain a minimum 3.5 cumulative or a minimum 3.3 major GPA.
- Complete the Core MCB courses for Honors credit (grade of B- or better in course) and complete MCB 297 A/B/C and 298 A/B.
- Take an average of one honors course per semester as upperclassmen.
- Consult with the honors advisor at least once every semester to discuss progress toward fulfilling the Concentration.
Academic Integrity

Students in the MCB Honors Concentration are expected to adhere to the highest standards of Academic Integrity, as set forth in the Student Code (Article 1, Part 4). Students who are found to have been penalized under Article 1, Part 4 may be dismissed from the MCB Honors Concentration.
How will the Concentration appear on my Transcript?

• On your Diploma, your degree is: Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts and Sciences

• On your transcript, your major is: Major in MCB, Concentration in MCB Honors
Applications for admission to the Honors Concentration during Spring 2016 will be accepted during the early part of the Fall semester (September 4-28).

Application will be available on-line as a webform.

Letter of recommendation must be submitted directly to Dr. Naidu in order to complete your application. See the webpage to download the form.
Timeline FA 2015

- Application and letter deadline: September 28
- Applications reviewed: ~Sept. 29- Oct. 5
- Qualified applicants invited for Interviews: ~Oct. 6
- Interviews conducted: ~Oct. 7-12
- Admittance offers: ~Oct. 19
- Acceptance required: ~Oct. 23
- Priority registration begins: Nov. 2
What do I do now?

- Consider who you will ask for a letter of recommendation.
- Apply via the webform by the deadline.
- Have a letter of recommendation submitted to Dr. Shawna Naidu by.
- If you make a mistake...
- Wait to be contacted.