

Honors opportunities at Wheaton

Wheaton is a place where students get noticed, receive encouragement and often are helped to achieve levels of excellence that even they had not contemplated before their college career.

W wheaton
college
massachusetts



May Fellows Scholars Program

The May Fellows Scholars Program helps intellectually gifted, high achieving students thrive academically, connect socially and engage deeply in the Wheaton community. It's a way for gifted students to find one another early on in their college experience, to connect across disciplines and activities, and to engage with students and faculty in a variety of enriched experiences throughout their college career.



The May Fellows program is intentionally less formal than other college honors programs. This allows students to participate in an honors opportunity without compromising additional educational goals, such as a double major or study abroad. May Fellows and their mentors plan exclusive activities as well as campus-wide events, often responding to current topics or critical issues, such as a documentary screening followed by discussion. Some May Fellows events have become campus traditions: like Story Slam, a night of stories told live on stage, and trivia nights featuring friendly competition between faculty, staff and students. There are also Friday Coffee and Conversation events with faculty, field trips to Boston venues and service outings to places such as the Greater Boston Food Bank.

History and membership

The May Fellows Scholars Program is named after Elizabeth S. May, former dean of the college and the first woman ever appointed to serve on the board of directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States. While many students are invited into the program at the time of admission, exceptional students in their second or third year at Wheaton may be nominated by a faculty member to apply for the program as well. An advisory board, made up of May Fellows from each class year, faculty and staff advisors, meets weekly to conceive of and plan programming and events.

May Fellows Colloquium

Over winter break, May Fellows work together as teams, with faculty guidance, to develop research projects that tackle relevant questions or themes, such as climate change or "What is true?" Participants receive one academic credit for their work, and present their results as part of the Wheaton Academic Festival.



Other honors opportunities

Phi Beta Kappa

Wheaton is one of only 286 colleges in the United States to host a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa (PBK), America's foremost academic honor society. Wheaton's chapter elects academically outstanding juniors and seniors who, upon their induction, become lifelong members of this society and may participate in the activities of the Wheaton chapter, the nearest alumni association and the national organization. Phi Beta Kappa membership is often helpful in applying to graduate school, certain types of employment and other honors. Wheaton's chapter was established in 1932 and sponsors PBK Visiting Scholars and the Ellison Lecture Series.

Honors theses

An honors thesis is an opportunity to work closely with a faculty member on research that helps you to synthesize and integrate your undergraduate experience. Unlike a typical collegiate research paper that involves summarizing research or work done by another, an honors thesis involves making an argument, presenting evidence and drawing and defending conclusions that are distinctively your own. Students who undertake an honors thesis often find it to be the most exciting, fulfilling and rewarding experience of their undergraduate career.

Examples of recent student honors thesis titles include:

- "Playgrounds for the Self: Video Game Narratives' Effect on Moral Identity"
- "Small Pond Water Chemistry and Algal Ecology: A Study of Two Eutrophic Bodies"
- "Secrecy in Flux: The CIA and Changing Context"
- "Cultural Capital Among Zero Waste Consumers"
- "'Down' Time: Experiences of Agency and Structure in a Women's Prison"
- "Quantitative Analysis of Gene Expression in Longfinned Zebrafish"
- "Our World Is Kind of Strange: Surrealism in Postmodern Picture Books"
- "Numerical Analysis of Periodic Motion of Tethered Satellite Systems"

Rhodes, Fulbrights and other awards

Wheaton has a remarkable record of helping its students compete for and win many prestigious undergraduate and postgraduate awards and fellowships. From Rhodes Scholars to Fulbright Fellowships, the list of Wheaton awards is long and impressive. Just since 2000, Wheaton students have won more than 240 of these awards, including:

- 3 Rhodes Scholars
- 108 Fulbright Fellows
- 19 Watson Fellows
- 14 Gilman International Scholarships
- 17 Davis Projects for Peace Grants
- 6 Truman Scholarships
- 4 Marshall Scholarships

This success is the product of Wheaton's talented student body and the deep engagement between Wheaton students and faculty that leads to thoughtful guidance and mentorship.



Elizabeth S. May

Office of Admission

26 E. Main Street
Norton, MA 02766

(P) 508-286-8251
admission@wheatoncollege.edu