**UTSA Honors College Application Instructions**

**Trailblazing the National Parks 3.0**

**Study Away Program**

**April 20-21 and May 11-23, 2024**

**Student Application**

We are excited for you to consider this study away program offered by the UTSA Honors College!

* You must be in Good Academic Standing with the Honors College (i.e., having maintained a cumulative (overall) and current (Fall 2023)) minimum of a 3.0 GPA throughout the application process and show good faith toward remaining in this manner as the spring semester completes. Students whose current GPA falls below 3.0 after spring 2024 midterms may be removed from consideration pending discussion with Honors College.
* Students are held to the Student Code of Conduct that is critical in demonstrating appropriate behavior. Violations and alleged violations under investigation during the spring 2024 semester will be discussed with the UTSA Behavior Intervention Team for assessing whether a prospective participant should remove themself from consideration of the course.
* Applications will be accepted and 15-minute Zoom interviews will be given on a rolling basis in Dec 2023/Jan 2024 until slots have been filled. The earlier you submit your complete application + transcript (includes Dec 2023 final grades with spring 2024 courses shown), the better your odds. If you apply earlier than the deadline, you may be contacted earlier for your interview. ***If you are VERY interested and it is VERY likely that you want to take this course, submit your intent as early as possible.***
* ***It is HIGHLY suggested you view*** [***opportunities***](•%09https:/honors.utsa.edu/scholarships/honors-experiential-learning-award.html) ***for supplemental financial awards prior to submitting their applications*** as it may be possible to further reduce your cost regardless of financial status. The award committee meets infrequently, and it is highly encouraged for a student to apply for aid ahead of time in case you are granted a spot in the course. For more information, contact [Stacie Garza](mailto:stacie.garza@utsa.edu) re: Honors awards or the Honors Scholarship [in-box](mailto:honors.scholarships@utsa.edu).

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Answer prompts where indicated. Include your UTSA transcript (not DegreeWorks) as described above with your response. Do not send them in separate emails. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

* Submit your responses to: [karen.engates@utsa.edu](mailto:karen.engates@utsa.edu)
* Decisions will be made for a maximum of 12 students to join the course, and a waiting list will be generated. Students selected must email Dr. Engates to formally accept the invitation and then submit a $500 ***nonrefundable*** payment through your myUTSA Account (formerly known as ASAP) no later than the date specified or they will be removed, and the next person will be notified. Payment will be confirmed by Honors College.
* Be aware of tight deadlines as the program needs to secure airline tickets, group activity reservations, and submit forms with participant information to make this trip work.
* If you have questions, ask Dr. Engates. Thank you for your interest and flexibility with this study away program.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Fri, Jan 26, 2024 | Completed application + transcript must be received no later than 5:00 PM. |
| Mon, Jan 29 – Wed, Jan 31, 2024 | 15-minute required Zoom interviews (or earlier depending on application submission) |
| Thurs, Feb 1, 2024 | Status notification (may occur earlier): accepted, waitlisted, denied |
| Fri, Feb 9, 2024 | Submit $500 nonrefundable payment by 5:00 PM CT (item will be posted by Honors College) |
| Mon, Mar 4, 2024 | Mandatory meeting #1 (~1.5 hr): specific meeting time (evening) and location TBD based on participants’ schedules; welcome, discussion, paperwork, signatures, insurance procedures |
| Mid-March 2024 | Summer Registration begins. Register and make payment for HON 3253.  \*Payment deadline will be earlier than for traditional summer courses. This will be updated soon once the university posts summer registration dates; tentatively plan for course payment to be made within two weeks of registration start date for Honors students. |
| Mon, Apr 1, 2024 | Mandatory meeting #1 (~1.5 hr): specific meeting time (evening) and location TBD based on participants’ schedules; paperwork, gear/rental info, project discussion, NOLS expectations |
| April 20-21, 2024 | NOLS-WFA Certification Course @ UTSA (TBD est. 7:45AM-7 PM both days) |
| Thurs, May 2, 2024 | Mandatory meeting #3 for participants (~1.5 hr): specific meeting time (evening) and location TBD based on participants’ schedules; partners, project proposals, questions |
| Wed, May 8, 2024 | All gear and provisions must be brought to Convocation Center for van packing (time TBD, likely 8-9 PM). |
| Sat, May 11, 2024 | Depart from San Antonio International Airport to Montrose Airport (time TBD, very early) |
| Thur, May 23, 2024 | Arrive to San Antonio International Airport (time TBD, late afternoon) |

Please answer the following prompts in RED FONT in the spaces provided.

1. Provide information requested. Indicate your fitness level (1 = sedentary up to 10 = active 5+x/wk); swimming ability (1 = cannot swim, 5 = can swim and tread water, up to 10 = swims regularly and/or has lifeguard training).
   1. Name (first/last/preferred): [insert answer here]
   2. Abc123 and Banner ID: [insert answer here]
   3. Major(s): [insert answer here]
   4. Classification in April 2024 (first year, soph, etc.): [insert answer here]
   5. UTSA email: [insert answer here]
   6. Fitness level (1 to 10): [insert answer here]
   7. Swimming ability (1 to 10): [insert answer here]
   8. Date of last tetanus shot (MM/DD/XXXX): [insert answer here]
   9. NOLS (National Outdoor Leadership School) encourages participants to be fully vaccinated and updated on boosters for COVID-19 for their NOLS-WFA courses. NOLS has policies that may include the removal of an individual who tests positive and/or presents illness symptoms. If this occurs, there is no way to make up this portion of the course and your grade may be impacted. Do you understand? [insert answer here (Y,N)]
   10. You are required to maintain active health insurance for the duration of this course and show proof of insurance after being accepted. *If you do not have insurance, UTSA offers* [*plans with enrollment periods*](https://utsa.myahpcare.com/enrollment/) *of Nov-Feb for spring/summer.* You should also be prepared to pay out of pocket on the trip if your insurance does not cover your needs. Do you understand and agree? [insert answer here (Y,N)]
2. This program is for students interested in experiencing an alternative way of living that lacks amenities of urban commercial life, including limitations on technologywhere you might not have use of your phone for several days at a time. Shared lodging is modest with small group tents in campgrounds. There is no air conditioning/heating, and climates range from hot, dry desert to temperate forest to cold, snow-covered areas. Food is planned, purchased, and prepared by the individual participant; at times there is no option to purchase food. ***Use of cell phones will be extremely minimized, not an everyday modern luxury***. Minimalization, organization, and flexibility in body/mind/attitude are core to this type of nomadic outdoor experience. Daily expectations: potential to be in a vehicle for long hours; physical exertion; equipment setup/take down, discussions, journaling; providing your own meals; adapting to others; maintaining personal hygiene especially when showers are not available; fully participating in activities and promoting a positive experience for everyone. Students should be able to hike several miles per day most days. We will live humbly and closely as a group and within the larger public community at campgrounds with park service employees, other visitors, and wildlife, including bugs, birds, snakes, scorpions, spiders, skunks, racoons, bears, etc. Participants **must** be able to attend all events related to this course in their entirety unless there is an ***extreme*** emergency as they are part of your grade for the course: pre-trip meetings, NOLS-WFA training at UTSA (April 20-21, 2024), and the long trip (May 11-23, 2024).

Please indicate using ‘YES’ or ‘NO’ to the following using RED FONT to indicate your answer:

* 1. Have you read and carefully considered the above statement? [insert answer here (Y, N)]
  2. Do you acknowledge and accept living conditions, physical expectations, and relationships that are core to your successful participation? [insert answer here (Y, N)]
  3. Do you understand you will have extremely limited access to your electronic devices to include going for several days without them at a time? [insert answer here (Y, N)]
  4. Do you have any conflicts with the weekend of April 20-21, 2024? [insert answer here (Y, N)]
  5. Do you have any conflicts (e.g., travel, internships, summer school, family/friend experiences) with the timing of the rest of this program (May 11 to May 23)? [insert answer here (Y, N)]
  6. Have you read, understand, and agree to the Conditions of Participation (next page)? [insert answer here (Y, N)]
  7. There is a nonrefundable $500 deposit to secure your spot. If a student cannot attend or is dismissed from the program, the payment will go toward UTSA Honors College scholarships; no funds will be returned. Do you understand this parameter? [insert answer here (Y, N)]
  8. **IMPORTANT:** Honors College is generously sponsoring a large portion of this program to reduce actual student cost of the trips and NOLS certification from $2000 down to $500 (i.e., HC is covering $1500 per person for lodging, transportation, activities, and supplies; you pay the $500 nonrefundable deposit, tuition, and fees). If you drop/withdraw from the course anytime after April 19, 2024, you may be required to reimburse the Honors College up to $1500 for these expenses pending evaluation by Honors College administration. Do you understand this parameter? [insert answer here (Y, N)]

1. Discuss your background and how it influenced you to want to do this study away program. Include relevant camping, backpacking, and outdoor experiences. [100-125 words, insert here]
2. How will this program contribute to your personal, academic, and professional growth? [100-125 words, insert here]
3. Why is it important for you to experience the national parks? what are your goals for the trip? [100-125 words, insert here]
4. What does experiential living mean to you, and why is it an important topic of study? [100-125 words, insert here]
5. How are you prepared:
   1. to live as a camping ‘nomad’ in minimal, shared, mostly outdoor conditions and to travel long distances by van in a shared space? [100-125 words, insert here]
   2. **to commit to separating yourself from the use of technology for most of the trip?** [100-125 words, insert here]
   3. to plan and budget for simple meals that may not be refrigerated? [100-125 words, insert here]
6. What challenges might you face while away and how will you overcome these? [100-125 words, insert here]
7. How do you deal with traveling situations that arise that are unexpected, require change in plans, or are beyond your control? [100-125 words, insert here]
8. How do you deal with individuals in a group who offer negative commentary and/or refuse to do their fair share to assist? [100-125 words, insert here]
9. If you are not selected for the initial round of students, what are your thoughts on being waitlisted with potential to be accepted later with accelerated payment to secure your spot? [100-125 words, insert here]
10. Indicate any special skills that you can bring to this experience (e.g., medical, certifications, yoga/meditation, navigation, musical, storytelling, camping, boy/girl scouts, food planning/prep). [100-125 words, insert here]

**PLEASE SCROLL TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION & REQUIRED SIGNATURE**

**Conditions of Participation**

**UTSA Honors College Program**

**HON 3253: Trailblazing the National Parks 2024**

You have chosen to take advantage of a study-away program opportunity provided by UTSA Honors College. This is an educational endeavor, with a series of curricular goals that you will need to achieve. This program **is not a vacation**. You will be engaged in experiential learning in minimal camping conditions and experiences at national parks. There is required, additional coursework at UTSA before leaving and upon return. It is expected you will actively participate in all official program activities and follow instructions and directions of instructors. To maximize your value added for this experience, it is necessary you behave respectfully and maturely and that you are collegial, respectful, and considerate to others for the entirety of the program. Any activity that interferes with the educational endeavor— your learning or learning of others—will not be tolerated. Any activity that potentially damages the relationship between UTSA, Dr. Karen Engates, the United States Government, national parks, and/or our host communities will not be tolerated and will be considered a sanctionable violation that may result in disciplinary action. Failure to comply with conditions listed in this document may have a negative impact on your course grade and could result in you being dismissed and returned home at your expense. Examples of non-tolerated behavior include, but are not limited to:

* Academic dishonesty
* Obstruction or disruption of teaching or other program activities
* Verbal negativity toward instructor(s), participants, program, Honors College, and/or UTSA
* Unauthorized absence from program activities
* Travel without at least one other student and without explicit approval from the instructor
* Failure to attend daily check-ins and confluence discussions.
* Use/threats of physical violence, sexual misconduct, bullying, and/or sexual harassment
* Disrespect, unprofessional behavior toward instructors, students, and other individuals
* Openly abusing the customs and mores of the community and/or violating state/national laws
* Damage or destruction of property of others, university (including lodging), or cultural sites that we visit.
* Abuse or misuse of alcohol or prescription drugs if their use leads you to do any of the following:
  + - Are underage (alcohol) or not the intended patient of prescription medication.
    - Be unable to conduct coursework or miss a scheduled field trip, lecture, or other program event.
    - Become ill.
    - Are disrespectful, engage in inappropriate or destructive behaviors, disturb others, or disrupt program events.
    - Engage in behavior that causes embarrassment to other group members, faculty, or host(s)
    - Engage in risky activities or make decisions that endanger yourself or others.
* Bringing alcohol to program sites to consume, distribute, or share with members of the group.
* Using illegal and/or recreational substances, including marijuana
* Disturbing others at night (we will follow the quiet hours of campgrounds)
* Bringing unauthorized guests to program facilities, including lodging and clinic/hospital, or activities
  + - Students’ family members and friends are not allowed, on program-related travel, event, or activity.
* No smoking, vaping, or other tobacco-related products allowed.
* Being absent for any scheduled pick-up or departure, except in cases of extreme emergencies
* Violating the UTSA Code of Student Conduct while on the program
* Engaging in another activity the instructor(s) consider to be a detriment to the overall program purpose.

Your instructors have authority to take actions they deem appropriate to address issues. Any participant caught using illegal drugs and marijuana varietals will be dismissed from the program and sent home. Breaking other rules may result in a verbal warning for the first offense or immediate sanctions depending on situation severity. Repeated offenses will bring other sanctions, up to and including program dismissal. Such actions may include, but not be limited to: verbal warnings, alterations of the individual’s involvement in activities and expectations, program dismissal, etc. Action by your instructors does not prevent or in any way preclude UTSA Student Conduct and Community Standards from also taking appropriate action upon your return to UTSA. Instructors will be unable to assist any student, whose actions violate or allegedly violate any local laws, regulations, etc., including any actions that lead to incarceration, or other criminal or civil penalties, nor is it their responsibility to do so. A dismissed student will not receive a refund for the program, tuition, fees, or other costs associated with enrollment; and the student shall bear additional costs of immediate transport home. A dismissed student will receive a grade of ‘F’ in the course.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read, understand, and agree to the above paragraphs.

Student\* Printed Name & Signature Date

\*Student **must** be 18 years old by first date of travel (April 20, 2024).