



## What is the difference between an honors college and an honors program?

An honors college is more likely to exist in a large research university setting with many other existing colleges such as engineering, business, agricultural, natural sciences, etc. Honors programs tend to be at smaller institutions that don't have college divisions or only two or three such colleges.

Many honors colleges evolved from university honors programs. Becoming an honors college is important in terms of structure and funding at universities. [The Differences Between an Honors Program and A Honors College: A Case Study](#) shows how the differences between the two programs at one institution. However, many of the features added to the honors college in the case study can be found at honors programs at other schools.

Given the wide variety of honors programs and colleges, it is difficult to make a distinction useful for students in terms of their college search. The [Dean Emeritus of the Honors College at the University of South Carolina](#) argues that the terms do not necessarily make a difference for the student. [The Public University Press](#) found little differences between programs and colleges with the exception that universities with honors colleges had higher national rankings than those with honors programs.

In general, an honors program or college is designed to provide academically talented students with challenges and opportunities available at the most highly ranked colleges and universities. The highly ranked institutions often do not have honors programs or colleges because their entire programs are supposed to be considered to be the most demanding available.

[The National College Honors Council](#) has a listing of two and four-year institutions with honors programs/colleges.

Public University Honors has a list of [50 Honors Programs](#) at public institutions. The website has a ranking of programs by [SAT minimum requirements](#) as well as a ratings system.

### Learn More:

- [What's the Point of an Honors College, Anyway?](#)
- [Honors College and Honors Experiences: Speaking as a Parent to Parents](#)
- [Honors College – Yes or No?](#)