The Molecular Biology and Biochemistry Department (MBB) has established an honors program to recognize and award its students who have done exceptional effort both in coursework and in their independent research projects.

Criteria to Qualify.
To qualify for Departmental Honors, a student must have attained, at the end of the junior year, a grade point average of at least 3.2 overall and 3.4 or better in courses required for the major. Exceptional students not meeting these criteria but wishing to apply for honors research may petition the Departmental Chairperson at the beginning of their Senior year.

Requirements to Complete Honors (also see page 3).
Students accepted to the program are expected to complete the following:
1) complete two semesters (6 credits per semester) of honors course work in 495-496 (or Henry Rutgers course numbers for those students in the Henry Rutgers Honors Program).
2) note each credit corresponds to a minimum of 3 hours of research per week in the lab.
3) a written honors thesis
4) an oral thesis presentation (normally ~30-50 minutes) in front of their research advisor and one additional faculty member from any of the 5 campuses or UMDNJ. Note it is up to the student and advisor as to whether others may attend the presentation. If your advisor is not in the MBB department then one of the faculty present at the oral defense must be from the MBB department.

When do you Receive Honors.
Students enrolled in 01:694:495, 496 or any of the various College Scholars Programs (like Henry Rutgers) are eligible to receive Departmental Honors at the time of graduation. The final decision regarding the level of honors is determined by a committee comprised of MBB faculty.

There are 4 levels of honors:
1) highest honors,
2) high honors
3) honors
4) no honors.
Criteria for Level of Honors. The following is the list of questions asked of research advisors in the 99/00 academic year to assist in determining the level of honors. The final decision regarding the level of honors is determined by a committee comprised of MBB faculty.

1. What kind of commitment did the student make to his/her research in your lab?
2. How much independence did the student achieve while working in your lab?
3. How much did the student accomplish, experimentally, while in your lab? Was there an accumulation of data on the student's part?
4. Did the student show evidence of creativity in regard to his/her research, e.g. come up with original ideas or approaches, do independent literature research on the topic and uncover information relevant to the project?
5. How would you rate the quality of the written thesis? Is the introduction a comprehensive review of the subject? Are results and figures described in an understandable and informative style? What conclusions are reached and how are conclusions justified? Did the student put significant effort into preparing the written thesis?
6. How would you rate the quality of the oral presentation? Was the oral presentation organized, lucid, informative? How did the student respond to questions? How was the student's fundamental knowledge and understanding of his project?
7. Are there any special factors which we should take into account in determining the student for Departmental Honors? Has the work been published? Will it be?
8. The MBB department awards 4 levels of honors to its students. What level of honors would you recommend for this student? **Highest honors**: for truly exceptional effort; **high honors** for excellence in the research, written thesis, and/or oral presentation; **honors** for average effort in the research, written thesis, and oral presentation, or **no honors** for the student who has done the bare minimum to get by.

Exceptional Case of an External Research Advisor.
External research with an advisor other than a Rutgers/UMDNJ science faculty member is allowed only if the student's MBB faculty advisor approves of the external research project, and agrees to be responsible for monitoring progress and assisting in assigning the final grade. Therefore each semester the faculty advisor must:
1) approve a written proposal of planned research accompanied by a letter of endorsement written by the external research advisor,
2) receive and grade the summary paper,
3) assign a final grade.

Other Special Cases will be handled by petition to the chairperson of the MBB department.