

Honors Contracts

Definition and Eligibility

- An honors contract is an agreement between a student and a faculty member that the student will do an enriched version of a non-honors course and thus be eligible to have that course count as 3 credits toward Baccalaureate Honors requirements.
- Students whose academic curricula seriously inhibit the completion of an honors program may petition through the approval process for up to **two** honors courses to be completed through honors contracts.
- ***Honors contracts are not available to freshmen*, and sophomores through seniors can complete a maximum of TWO contracts total to count toward BHP requirements.****
- **NOTE:** It is NOT recommended that a student complete any more than one contract in any one semester.
- Contracts are generally restricted to courses at the 200-level or above*, in the student's major or minor field.
- Intended contracts must be approved by the faculty sponsor **and** the honors director **before the semester in which the contract will take place begins**.
- ***Finalized, formal contracts (see last page of this document) must be approved and signed by all parties by the end of the second week of the semester in which the contracted work will be undertaken.***
- Proposals must include a copy of **both** the course syllabus that the faculty member would normally distribute to students, **and** the revised syllabus for the honors student.
- The revised syllabus can be a list of enhanced or additional assignments for the honors student, and **must** include a specific description of how the revisions bring the course up to standards for honors courses. Enhanced/ additional assignments can include longer papers, additional smaller assignments beyond what the rest of the students in the class have to do, and presentations. At least one of these assignments **MUST** include at least one written assignment that requires a review of primary (or, if applicable, secondary) sources. It is also recommended that the student deliver a short oral presentation of the honors work, either in class or individually to the professor. The revised syllabus should also list specific deadlines for the honors assignments.
- Upon completion of the course, the final product(s) - paper(s), laboratory report, short presentation(s), etc. - must be approved by the sponsoring faculty member. The sponsor then responds to the Honors Director's evaluation request with a recommendation to grant honors credit if the contract has been fulfilled.

*Any exceptions must be proposed to and approved by the BHP director.

Quality as well as Quantity

Honors contract projects add an enhanced dimension to regular coursework through some combination of quantity of work, sophistication of assignments, and expectations of quality. For example, honors students may be expected to read and to respond to more material or material that is more challenging, or they may be asked to engage the material on a more sophisticated level. Typically, the contract will make clear how the honors project will meet most or all of the following criteria, adapted from requirements for honors courses:

- Honors contract projects focus on, or reflect understanding of, principles of the discipline as evident in expert habits and practices.
- Honors contract projects nurture the ability to communicate effectively both one's conclusions and the process by which one reached them.
- Honors contract projects include primary literature, scholarship, criticism, and other texts, as appropriate, rather than rely on textbooks alone.
- Honors contract projects are designed to build knowledge and conceptual understanding, not merely foster mastery of factual detail.
- If the contract is based primarily on a creative project, evaluation will be based on the criteria appropriate to the genre as determined and specified by the professor and agreed to by the student.

Grading

Honors students are typically expected to complete all work required on the standard syllabus. To receive honors credit for the course, honors students **must complete the course with a grade of "B" or better and satisfactorily complete the terms of the contract during the semester that credit is earned**. Also, students receiving an "A" or "B" in a contracted course who have not satisfactorily completed the terms of their contract will not receive honors credit. Instructors will not penalize students who do not complete the terms of their honors contracts; these students will receive the grade earned in the class.

Planning a contract To receive honors credit for a course, the student must: (1) obtain the instructor's and the BHP director's consent to take the course for honors credit; (2) develop, in conjunction with the instructor, a description of the course enhancement activity or activities that s/he will engage in to earn honors credit; (3) complete a Contract to Earn Honors Credit for a Non-Honors Course with the instructor (see next page); and (4) have the contract approved also by the honors director. Remember: ***Contracts must be approved and signed by all parties by the end of the second week of the semester in which the contracted work will be undertaken.***

When is the contracted work complete?

The contracted work is complete when the instructor is satisfied that the student has successfully completed all of the predetermined terms of the contract by the due date. An evaluation form is sent to the course instructor at the end of the semester and must be completed by the instructor and sent back to the Honors Director.

Contract to Earn Honors Credit for a Non-Honors Course

A. Student Information and Terms of the Contract

Professor and Student: Please read all Honors Contract guidelines on the previous pages of this document before signing this contract.

Student's Name _____ Semester _____

Student's email _____ Student Bronc ID _____

Major(s) _____

Course Name and Number _____ Course CRN _____

Professor's Name and Department _____

Professor's Office and Telephone _____

Attach to this sheet BOTH a copy of the syllabus that is normally distributed to all students in the course AND a revised syllabus which demonstrates how the additional contracted work complements and builds on the standard assignments and expectations. The revised syllabus can be a list of enhanced or additional assignments, and must include a specific description of how the revisions bring the course up to standards for honors courses. Enhanced/ additional assignments can include longer papers, additional smaller assignments beyond what the rest of the students in the class have to do, and presentations. At least one of these assignments MUST include at least one written assignment that requires a review of primary (or, if applicable, secondary) sources. It is also recommended that the student deliver a short oral presentation of the honors work, either in class or individually to the professor. The revised syllabus must also ***include a timetable for completion, including due dates for assignments or stages, and a final due date.*** Plan to get periodic feedback from your professor regarding your progress toward satisfactory completion of the contract.

B. Student and Professor Authorization of the Contract for Honors Credit

Student's Signature

Date

Professor's Signature

Date

C. Administrative Approval of the Contract for Honors Credit

Honors Director's Signature (BHP)

Date