The Honors Contract

Design your own course of study and earn Honors credit in a non-Honors course.

The Honors Contract allows an Honors student two options:

1. Enroll in a 3000 or 4000-level non-Honors course, complete additional work that represents a qualitative enhancement to the existing course, and have the completed course and contract count as one course towards the minimum number of courses required to graduate in the Honors College, while receiving course credit for the completed course.

2. Enroll in and complete any undergraduate independent study (e.g. PHYS 4321 Undergrad Research or FCD 4391 Independent Study). By turning in the scope of work for the independent study on the Honors Contract form, the student will be considered to be in an Honors Contract. After completing the undergraduate independent study, the student will earn Honors credit for that effort. (Note: If you plan to enroll in HON 4391, Honors Independent Study, please submit the form found on our website to receive approval to enroll in that course.)

How does the Honors Contract work?

1. If the student is enrolled in an undergraduate independent study course, indicate that on the Honors Contract (and have the professor sign the form), and turn in the form to dm14@txstate.edu or 408 Lampasas by the 12th class day.

2. If the course is 3000 or 4000-level non-honors course, the student and professor enter into an agreement that the student will complete additional work in the class to earn honors credit. The contract includes the goals, timetable, methods, materials and assessment of an academic activity to be undertaken by the student, in addition to basic course requirements. Approval is at the discretion of the Director of Academic Development in the Honors College or the Dean of the Honors College.

3. Both student and professor of the course sign the Contract at the beginning of the semester ideally by the 12th class day but no later than four weeks from the first day of the semester, or first week of a summer session. Both the student and professor keep a copy of the Contract, and another copy is to be delivered by the student to the Director of Academic Development of the Honors College. Together they complete and sign the assessment form at the end of the semester. The Director will approve or reject each proposal.

4. The additional work in the Contract is in addition to the requirements of a course. A student must be committed to doing excellent work and attending first to all regular syllabus requirements before undertaking a Contract. Students must earn an A or B for their overall work in the course before the completed Contract can be approved for Honors credit.

5. Students will receive a regular grade for all regular course work. This grade affects the GPA. Students will also receive a performance evaluation for the Honors Contract. This determines whether or not the course will count as an Honors course, counting toward the required number of courses to graduate in the Honors College.

6. The professor will insure that assessment of the Contract includes the participation of the student. However, the professor’s decision must be determinative. The professor will indicate the student’s level of performance for the Contract to determine whether or not the student should receive Honors credit for the course or not.

7. The assessment will result in a portfolio containing the completed Contract, the assessment form, the writing assignment (if required) or a written synopsis of the assignment, and any other material relevant to assessing the student’s achievement.

8. The Honors Contract must include the completion of additional work that represents a qualitative enhancement to the existing course. The additional work should approximate but not exceed a 15
percent increase in the work asked of other students. Contracts also should include more than one of the following:

- a deeper and more intense approach to the subject matter
- the completion of an additional set of readings
- an additional project not expected of other students in the course
- alternative assignments that are more intellectually challenging than those designed for other students, possibly including work demanding higher level reasoning skills
- a special focus on the nature of the discipline
- student-faculty discussion of additional readings
- experiential learning outside of the classroom, that may involve attendance at lectures or performances on or off campus or to engage in some special field research that has a special connection to the course content
- student initiated dialogue in the classroom or a form of co-teaching a class or classes
- collaborative work with the instructor

9. The student may undertake more than one Contract during his or her undergraduate career. The student cannot substitute a Contract for HON 4390B, the Honors Thesis.

10. For students who choose to minor in Honors Studies, undertaking an Honors Contract will result in either Honors credit OR the enrolled course credit, not both.

11. Indication that a student successfully completed an Honors Contract will be designated on the student’s transcript as follows:

- "Honors work included" will appear as a ‘standard comment’ beneath the course designated as an Honors Contract course.

12. To acknowledge the professor’s work with the student, letters will be sent to the professor, his or her chair or director, and dean.

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