

A FACULTY GUIDE TO HONORS CONTRACTS

Revised and effective January 2015

A. What is an Honors Contract?

An Honors contract allows a student in a class that is not Honors to earn Honors credit by doing additional work for the course. The Honors project should enrich the course for the student, and add value to the academic and intellectual experience. The work undertaken for the Honors project must be above and beyond the requirements in place for the class.

B. The Role of the Course Instructor

The cooperation of the course instructor is essential to the Honors contract. The student who wishes to do a contract for your course will contact you to ask if you are willing to oversee a contract for the class in which s/he is enrolled. No faculty member is obliged to participate in an Honors contract. You may assume that an Honors student who contacts you about a contract is in good standing in the Honors College. If not, the contract will not be approved. Only classes at the 3xxx and 4xxx level may be considered for a contract. Classes must be organized and set to meet at specific times, rendering private lessons, internships, independent studies, practica, and similar learning experiences unsuitable for contracts.

C. What Honors Contract Process

- The student has been provided with a copy of the Student Guide to Honors Contracts and a copy of the Faculty Guide to Honors Contracts for you.
- If you agree to supervise an Honors contract, the next step is to help the student find a suitable project. Some instructors tell the student to come up with an idea for their approval while others provide guidance to the student. Either way, the student must write up the proposal for submission.
- The student submits the Honors Contract form, the proposal, and the course syllabus to the Honors College by the due date, which is 5 p.m. on the Friday of the third full week of the semester.
- We review each proposal and let students know if the contract is approved or if additional work is needed. When a student wants to do a contract and the course instructor is willing, we try to come up with an idea that is acceptable to the student, the course instructor, and the Honors College. If a paper is already required in a class, the Honors paper must be separate, so the student will be writing two papers. We do not allow a course assignment to be lengthened for the Honors project.
- The student should confer with you, the course instructor, regularly during the semester. Failure to do so as requested should be grounds for rejecting the project and denying the student Honors credit.

- Projects are due at the Honors College no later than 5 p.m. on November 15th (for fall projects) or April 15th (for spring projects). If this date falls on a weekend, the deadline is moved to the following Monday at 5 p.m. Projects may be submitted to you and the Honors College at the same time.

D. What is the Nature of an Honors Contract Project?

- It must be a separate, stand-alone project beyond the regular course requirements.
- It must be scholarly work that enhances at least one of the learning objectives of your course syllabus.
- There must be a written component. While a student may submit copies of slides, CDs, or other materials, a paper is always at the heart of the project.
- Projects may take many forms. Music compositions, designs, creative stories and novellas, laboratory research, book reviews, and other projects are submitted every semester.
- The most common project is the research paper. Research papers must have at least 2,100 words of text, not counting citations, footnotes, and bibliographies. Papers must include citations or footnotes and a list of references in a form acceptable in the student's discipline. The Honors College does not accept personal essays for Honors contracts. The Honors College does not accept other non-scholarly work such as papers that appear to be research papers but have no citations/footnotes or references. The Honors College also does not accept write-ups of practical topics such as how to prepare a resume or find a public service project. The work must be of a scholarly nature.
- Creative works must have a paper component of at least 1,500 words. The paper should describe the creative work, the creative process, the student's vision for the project, and a discussion of why the work is a scholarly contribution.

E. How Will the Honors Contract Project Be Evaluated?

- The course instructor sets standards for the student's work. If you, the course instructor, deny Honors credit for the project, the Honors College will not consider overriding that decision.
- All projects will also be evaluated by the dean of the Honors College. The dean reserves the right to deny Honors credit to any Honors contract project that suffers from quality or quantity issues, or that results from plagiarized work or other academic dishonesty, or in any other way is contrary to the standards of the Honors College and/or the Honors-contract process.
- UNT rules about academic integrity are in force for all work.
- The Honors College will deny credit for projects if:
 1. The project is not submitted by the deadline, according to correct procedures.

2. The project does not have a written component. Papers must have at least 2,100 words of text, proper citations, and a list of references. If the project involves other activities—such as building a model, composing music, or other pursuits—the paper must be at least 1,500 words in length, not counting footnotes or in-text citations. All information must be properly documented and a list of references must be included.
3. Writing is not of high quality, including spelling and syntax.
4. The grade in the course is lower than a B. No Honors credit may be earned unless the course grade is an A or B.
5. The project is not a separate and distinct assignment from the requirements of the class. In other words, the student cannot satisfy a course requirement and the Honors contract with the same work even if it is longer than the course requires.

F. Additional Details

- The Honors contract will not generate any actual credits for the student beyond those for the related course. Upon completion and approval of the contract, the Honors College will request that the Office of the Registrar add an H notation to the course, provided the grade earned in the course is an A or B.
 - There is no such thing as a retroactive Honors contract.
 - A grade of Incomplete is not available for an Honors contract. In addition, if the student takes an Incomplete in the course linked to the Honors contract, the contract is immediately voided and no Honors credit will be awarded, regardless of whether the student eventually completes the class.
 - Once a student undertakes two contracts without completing either, he or she is not eligible for further contracts.
 - A project that is not completed, not submitted, or for which Honors credit is denied, will not appear on the student's record and will not affect the student's Grade Point Average.
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