

COLLEGE OF DUPAGE HONORS PROGRAM

HONORS CONTRACT

Guidelines for Students and Faculty

SUMMARY:

The Honors Contract allows an individual student to earn Honors credits for a non-Honors course. This opportunity is only available for non-Honors courses that are not already offered as an Honors section and have an open seat. Honors Contracts are not available for classes that are shorter than 8 weeks.

To be eligible, a student must have taken at least one Honors course. Exceptions might be made for students who have the recommendation of the faculty member and the approval of the Director of the Honors Program.

To begin, the student selects an instructor for a class in which the student is enrolled and presents an idea or topic to that instructor.

The faculty member must get tentative approval from their Dean, obtain a signature from the Dean, and help the student fill out the proposal form before the form is submitted to the Honors Program. (The Dean does not approve the project but needs to ensure that the stipend will be paid and that teaching load is not adversely affected for the faculty member.)

Then, with the approval of the faculty member and the Honors Program, the student is given the opportunity to complete an extra or enriched project that is connected to a topic in the course syllabus. The project must entail approximately 15 hours of work outside of regular course expectations for the student, and approximately 3-5 hours of consultation with the faculty member. The project must result in a product that is intended to be shared with an audience beyond the instructor.

Completion of the project with a “B” or better will convert the regular course into an Honors course. (The project grade will not be part of the regular course grade. It is only for determining whether the student has earned Honors credit.) For the individual student, the course will be designated as Honors on the student’s transcript.

PURPOSE:

- Allow individual students to earn Honors credits for courses that are not offered as Honors sections.
- Enable individualized, comprehensive exploration of an academic topic of personal interest not covered in an existing Honors course.
- Present an intellectually challenging enterprise for students and faculty.
- Provide the opportunity to further develop critical thinking skills and perform significant research with one-on-one guidance from the instructor.

- Provide an opportunity to produce scholarly and creative work (a product) that will be shared with an audience.
- Prepare students for advanced undergraduate work upon transfer to a 4-year college or university.
- Address the needs of students for whom scheduling an Honors section is impossible.
- Address the needs of students who need credits in disciplines that don't have Honors sections.

PROCESS

Before agreeing to an Honors Contract, both full-time and part-time faculty need to contact their Dean for tentative approval. The Deans do not approve the project, but they need to make sure that this project will not affect an adjunct faculty member's teaching load and they need to approve payment of the stipend.

The Honors Contract will be monitored by the Honors Program through 3 required forms:

1. Honors Contract Proposal Form
2. Midterm Progress Report
3. Project Evaluation

Submit these completed forms by the deadlines below to the Director of the Honors Program, Honors Program Office, BIC 3418, 630-942-3318, honorsprogram@cod.edu.

Honors Contract Proposal Form

Upon agreeing to direct the Honors Contract project, the instructor:

1. contacts their Dean for tentative approval as soon as possible,
2. obtains the Dean's signature on the form,
3. works with the student to complete the form,
4. signs the form,
5. and submits the completed form to the Honors Program for final approval.

The completed form must be submitted to the Honors Program, BIC 3418. If the student or faculty member cannot turn in the hard copy of the signed form, an email version from the instructor and sent to honorsprogram@cod.edu is acceptable.

The instructor and student agree to:

- Work together to complete the Honors Contract Proposal Form.
- Choose a topic in the syllabus that warrants more research or exploration.
- Develop an Honors Contract project that should make the student's experience qualitatively different from the non-Honors course experience. Accordingly, the

student and instructor will describe the qualitative differences in the Honors Contract Form.

- Propose a project that will result in a product that will be shared with an audience.
- Submit the Honors Contract Proposal Form with all necessary signatures to the Director of the Honors Program for project approval.

Upon approval of the project by the Honors Program, the student commits to dedicate the time and effort necessary to complete the Honors project (approximately 15 hours outside of regular course expectations).

The faculty member commits to working with the student for approximately 3-5 hours throughout the term.

Deadlines: Thursday of the 3rd week in 16-week or 12-week term; Thursday of the 2nd week in a 10-week or 8-week term. Honors Contracts are not available for classes that are shorter than 8 weeks. Honors Contracts for Study Abroad courses must be proposed and approved prior to travel.

Early submissions are encouraged.

Midterm Progress Report

A brief progress report will be submitted to the Honors Program in order to track progress and provide an opportunity for the student and instructor to reflect on what has been accomplished so far and whether there are any obstacles that need to be addressed.

Deadlines: Thursday of the 8th week of a 16-week term, Thursday of the 6th week of a 12-week term, Thursday of the 5th week of a 10-week term or Thursday of the 4th week of an 8-week term.

Project Evaluation

When final course grades are submitted, the instructor must inform the Honors Program whether the project was completed with a “B” or better, or is incomplete. (The project grade will not be part of the regular course grade. It is only for determining whether the student has earned Honors credit.) At that time, the course may be converted into Honors credit on the transcript.

Deadline: When grades are due.

WHAT IS AN HONORS PROJECT PRODUCT?

Upon completion, the student is required to have a product of some kind that will be presented to an audience. The product could be:

- a paper/essay,
- a professionally printed poster,
- a PowerPoint-type presentation,
- a demonstration,
- artwork,
- a musical composition,
- a computer program,
- or something else that is appropriate.

WHAT IS AN HONORS PROJECT AUDIENCE?

Although the instructor is the primary audience, it is important that the student prepare a product for a wider audience. Engaging with a wider audience will help Honors students develop as scholars, leaders and citizens. Presenting during the term would be ideal, but some of these presentations and submissions may occur *after* the term is over.

The instructor and student may work with the Director of the Honors Program to find a suitable audience. Possibilities include:

- a presentation to a small group in the Honors conference room,
- a presentation to a class,
- submission to a publication for undergraduate student work such as COD's *Essai* or the National Collegiate Honors Council's *URCA*,
- presentation at the Honors Council of the Illinois Region's Student Symposium in February,
- presentation at the COD Library Student Research Symposium,
- or some other venue.

HOW MANY HONORS CONTRACTS CAN A STUDENT HAVE?

Only **two** Honors Contract classes can be counted toward fulfilling the Honors Scholar requirements. Exceptions may be made in situations with prior approval by the Director of the Honors Program or the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. We recognize that students majoring in some fields of study might need to engage in more Honors Contracts because there are no Honors courses in their areas. We also recognize the needs of students who must take courses at night, on weekends or in the summer when Honors courses are not typically offered.

IF AN HONORS SECTION IS OFFERED AND HAS SEATS AVAILABLE, OTHER REGULAR SECTIONS OF THAT CLASS CANNOT HAVE A CONTRACT.

This opportunity is only available for non-Honors classes that are not currently offered as an Honors section. If the Honors section is filled, then a student may engage in an Honors Contract for a regular class section.

A NOTE ON SERVICE LEARNING:

If the project includes Service Learning/Community Engagement (e.g. a volunteer project connected to course curriculum), contact the Service Learning Office in Career Services for the criteria needed to earn a “Service Learning” designation on the student’s transcript.

A NOTE ON PROFESSIONALLY PRINTED POSTERS:

Writing, Reading, Speech Assistance (WRSA) has a mini-module workshop and other assistance available to students who want to create a professionally printed academic poster. Contact the WRSA office in the Learning Commons. Color posters can be printed for approximately \$17.00 - \$27.00 in Print Services. (Depending on the audience, this cost might be covered by the Honors Program with prior approval.)

FACULTY COMPENSATION:

Faculty compensation will be a stipend based on the equivalent of one credit hour of Independent Study, as calculated in section “F 10 Payment for Cooperative Education, Internship and Supervision of Independent Studies” in the CODFA contract.

An Honors Contract does not count toward a full-time faculty member’s teaching load. However, it might count towards an adjunct faculty member’s teaching load. Faculty are advised to communicate with their Dean as early as possible.

The stipend will be paid regardless of whether the student satisfactorily completes the project.

FACULTY FACILITATOR:

In some disciplines, the teaching faculty member for a class might not be available to work with a student on an Honors Contract project. We acknowledge that there are some disciplines, such as Fashion, or some unique situations in which adjunct faculty are not available during the week to mentor a student. In those cases, the teaching faculty member may allow a full-time faculty member in their discipline to be the “Faculty Facilitator” for the Honors Contract project. In that case, the Faculty Facilitator will co-sign the Honors Contract Proposal Form. The Midterm Progress Report and Project Evaluation will need to be signed by the Faculty Facilitator only. For all intents and purposes, the Faculty Facilitator will be the project mentor for the student. The Faculty Facilitator will be paid the stipend.

QUESTIONS?

Contact the Director of the Honors Program, Honors Program Office, BIC 3418, 630-942-3318, honorsprogram@cod.edu.