

## **COLLEGE OF DUPAGE HONORS PROGRAM**

### **HONORS INDEPENDENT STUDY**

#### **Guidelines for Students and Faculty**

The Honors Independent Study offers Honors credit for individual coursework on a topic or for a course that is not otherwise being offered. It is initiated by a student who has taken at least one Honors course. The student selects an instructor and presents the idea or topic to that instructor. With the approval of the faculty member, division Dean and the Honors Program; the student will enroll in 1-4 credits in 1840 (Independent Study), or a course that is not currently being offered, as an Honors section. The regular independent study will be given a “course type” of “Honors” in MyAccess. The course will be designated as Honors on the student’s official transcript after completion.

#### **WHAT MAKES THE *HONORS* INDEPENDENT STUDY DIFFERENT?**

An Independent Study is an agreement between a student and professor to allow the student to do the academic work needed for course credit hours in a specific discipline. (One credit hour is equivalent to 37.5 hours of coursework.)

A regular Independent Study can be developed into Honors credit with the approval of the professor and the Honors Program if it is qualitatively enriched beyond the expectations of a regular Independent Study. "Honors" does not mean it is more work; rather, the experience should be enhanced, deeper and offer a way for the student to share what they have learned.

#### **PURPOSE:**

- Enable individualized, comprehensive exploration of an academic topic of personal interest not covered in the topical outline of an existing course, or complete the requirements of an existing course that is not currently being offered.
- 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.

## **PROCESS:**

Two forms need to be completed and approved:

1. The division's regular Independent Study form will need to be approved by the instructor's Dean in order to have a course created in which the student can register. (NOTE: One hour of credit must be equivalent to 37.5 hours of academic work.)
2. The Honors Independent Study form needs to be approved by the Honors Program in order for the course to be given the course type of "Honors."

Submit these completed forms to the Director of the Honors Program, Honors Program Office, BIC 3418, 630-942-3318, [honorsprogram@cod.edu](mailto:honorsprogram@cod.edu).

Both forms need to be approved in order for the student to enroll in the class as an Honors section. Early submissions are encouraged.

**Deadlines: Thursday of the second week of class after Fall, Spring or Summer term begins.**

Upon agreeing to direct the Honors Independent Study, the instructor:

1. contacts their Dean for tentative approval as early as possible,
2. obtains the regular Independent Study form for their division (not all divisions use the same form),
3. works with the student in order to complete the regular Independent Study form and any other necessary attachments,
4. submits the form to their Dean for approval,
5. alerts Division scheduling staff that an Honors Independent Study will possibly need to be created so the student will be able to register.

In order for the regular Independent Study to become an Honors Independent Study, the instructor:

1. contacts the Director of the Honors Program as early as possible,
2. works with the student to complete the Honors Independent Study Proposal Form,
3. submits a copy of both the regular Independent Study form and the Honors Independent Study form, and any attachments, to the Director of the Honors Program for review.

All specifications in the Active Course File will apply, but the Honors Independent Study should be qualitatively different from the non-Honors Independent Study. Accordingly, the instructor and student will describe the qualitative differences in the Honors Independent Study Proposal Form.

Upon approval by the Director of the Honors Program, the revised/final documents are sent to the division Dean for review and scheduling. The student must then register for the Honors Independent Study.

After the student registers, the instructor guides the student in determining, designing, and completing the course content and learning outcomes.

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.

The instructor and student will 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.

### **A NOTE ON INDEPENDENT STUDY CREDIT HOURS:**

According to the COD Administrative Procedures Manual, "Independent Study Definition: Courses offered in an individualized format that can include both online and face-to-face meetings. In all instances, these courses must meet the required amount of academic engagement as dictated by *Board of Trustee Policy 25-76: Assignment of Credit Hours.*" Below is the Board policy:

Educational Programs – Instructional Procedure No. 25-76:

Assignment of Credit Hours

College credits shall be awarded in a manner than conforms to standards set by the Federal credit hour definition (Federal Register 75 FR 66832 p. 66946) and in conformance to the Higher Learning Commission Policy FDCR.A.10.020.

One semester credit hour is the amount of student effort that approximates not less than 37.5 hours of academic engagement in coursework (in-class/instructional time plus out-of-class student work) as represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement.

All courses leading to the award of credit, including courses that have less structured classroom schedules such as, clinical practicums, online/hybrid courses, internships and special projects will adhere to learning outcomes found in the faculty-approved active course file.

### **A NOTE ON HONORS CREDITS:**

Except in situations with prior approval by the Honors Program, only two Honors Independent Study courses can be counted toward fulfilling the Honors Scholar requirements. An Honors Independent Study cannot replace the Honors Seminar (Learning Community Seminar or Advanced Selected Topics Seminar).

### **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 \$32.00 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 based on section “F 10 Payment for Cooperative Education, Internship and Supervision of Independent Studies” in the CODFA contract. An Honors Independent Study is compensated the same as a regular Independent Study. Teaching an Independent Study will affect the instructor’s teaching load.

### **QUESTIONS?**

Contact the Director of the Honors Program, Honors Program Office, BIC 3418, 630-942-3318, [honorsprogram@cod.edu](mailto:honorsprogram@cod.edu).