

Contracting Honors Courses: *A Brief Guide*

In order to fulfill the 9 Honors credit hours required for graduation from the Potomac State College Honors Program, students may “contract” Honors credit from any of their non-Honors instructors. Projects and extra instruction undertaken by an Honors student under a contract exist *in addition to* other coursework and are, therefore, not a substitute for regular class work. That said, contracting Honors credit can be a rewarding, in-depth look at additional topic or topics not normally covered in a regular class.

All Honors credits contracted by a student must meet the following criteria and must be approved by the Honors Program Advisory Committee and Dean of Curriculum and Instruction.

- Honors contract credits are normally applied in classes numbered 200 and above. Special circumstances *only* may warrant the contracting of Honors credit for a class below the 200 level.
- A memo describing the nature of the additional work to be completed for Honors credit must be submitted to the Honors Program Coordinator. This memo must include a detailed description of the work to be completed, how this work may be defined as “Honors-level,” project deadlines to be met in completing work, and grading criteria agreed upon by both student and instructor. (See attached sample form.)
- Contracted Honors credits (a maximum of 4 hours) may be earned only by completing a project *outside of the normal instructional parameters* for a class. Such projects must clearly and fully demonstrate that the student has taken an extra initiative in addressing a particular topic or segment of material from a given class.
- Instructors must proofread and sign-off on project abstracts prior to project completion.
- Contracted Honors credit hours may not be more than the number of hours assigned for completion of a particular course in the usual manner.
- As per Honors Program policies, a maximum of 4 Honors credit hours may be obtained using the contract method.
- Only those students who have completed 28 college credits will be eligible to contract a course.

Helpful hints to provide a detailed proposal

Many proposals include a research paper or literature review and/or a presentation. These are not the only options for proposals; however, if you use them, the following information should help you have a better idea of what information should be included in your proposal.

Presentation Only:

- Include length (suggested is at least 60 min)
- Include the minimum number of sources required (suggested is 5 sources)
- Include whether there is a date requirement for sources. If current sources are required, define current. If there is not a requirement, explain why not.

Research Paper/Literature Review Only:

- Include length with spacing, font, margins (suggested minimum is 10 pages single-spaced or 20 double spaced with 12 point font, 1" margins and Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri font)
- Include bibliography style that will be used
- Include the minimum number of sources required (suggested is 5 sources)
- Include whether there is a date requirement for sources. If current sources are required, define current. If there is not a requirement, explain why not.

Research Paper/Literature Review and Presentation:

- Paper/Review
 - Include length with spacing, font, margins (suggested minimum is 5 pages single-spaced or 10 double spaced with 12 point font, 1" margins and Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri font)
 - Include bibliography style that will be used
 - Include the minimum number of sources required (suggested is 3 sources)
 - Include whether there is a date requirement for sources. If current sources are required, define current. If there is not a requirement, explain why not.
- Presentation
 - Include length (suggested is at least 20 min)
 - Include the minimum number of sources required (suggested is 3 sources)
 - Include whether there is a date requirement for sources. If current sources are required, define current. If there is not a requirement, explain why not.

Other ideas:

- Service Learning Project
- Additional Lab (if contracting a lecture/lab course)

Section 1. Describe the nature of the project you will undertake in order to demonstrate an in-depth look into a topic or topics not covered during class instruction. Be specific. What questions will you attempt to answer? What kinds of research must be undertaken to complete this project? How does this differ from regular class work, and why should it be considered as Honors-level work?

Section 2. How will this project be graded? What considerations will your instructor take into account when evaluating your project work? Discuss these issues with your instructor. Be specific. (Please note: Contracted projects must receive a grade of "B" or better in order to be counted for Honors credit.)

Section 3. Fill in the following table with deadlines for completion of your project and its associated research. Be concise in detailing the work to be completed; name specific tasks you'll have done.

| Date | Description of Work to Be Completed | by Given Date |
|------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
|------|-------------------------------------|---------------|

Contract for Students and Faculty Engaged in Work for Honors Credit

The following contract and all associated materials in this guide must be submitted to the Coordinator of the Honors Program no later than May 1 for a course to be contracted during the following fall semester or no later than Dec. 1 for a course to be contracted the following Spring semester.

Student Information

Name:

Mailing Address:

ID Number: 700 - -

Email Address:

Telephone Number:

Course Information

Term:

Title and Number:

Department:

CRN:

Instructor:

Credit Hours (Regular Credit):

Credit Hours Desired (Honors):

The above-named instructor and student have met to discuss:

- additional work required for fulfillment of Honors credit in this course (detailed in section 1)
- deadlines to be met for proper completion of research and/or projects (detailed in section 3)
- grading criteria for projects and/or research materials presented to the above-named instructor upon completion of the course (detailed in section 2)
- how this extra research and/or project material will be reflected in this course's regular grade as well as in grading for Honors credit

Further, the above-named student understands that Honors credit will be awarded only at the discretion of the Dean for Curriculum and Instruction, the Honors Program Advisory Committee, and the facilitating instructor.

Failure to meet agreed-upon deadlines and criteria may result in *no Honors credit* being awarded for the projects and/or research detailed in section 1 of this guide. **Additional (i.e., projects and/or research materials) work completed for Honors credit must be submitted to the Honors Program Coordinator not later than the week before Finals Week of the current semester. Failure to submit this work on time will also result in *no credit* for this Honors contract course.**

By signing this document, I attest that I have read and understand the guidelines set forth in this guide for contracting Honors credit.

_____ (student) _____ (date)

Office and Instructor Approval Form

I, the undersigned, have read and approve the following student for completion of the project and/or research detailed in section 1 of this guide.

_____ (student – print)

_____ (Instructor -print)

Office Address:

Telephone Number:
Email Address)

_____ (Instructor) _____ (Date)

_____ (Honors Coordinator) _____ (Date)

_____ (Dean – upon completion) _____ (Date)

Honors Contract Course Grade sheet

(to be submitted with research and/or project materials upon course completion)

Term:

Student Information

Name:

Rank:

ID Number: 700 - -

Course Number and Title:

Honors Credit Hours:

Instructor:

Department:

Final Grade for Honors Contract Credit:

_____ (Instructor – upon completion) _____ (Date)