

Guidelines for Crafting a Contract for Honors Credit in a Non-Honors Course Section

This document guides students and instructors in developing a contract for receipt of Honors credit in a UNC Asheville course that is not designated as an Honors course. Applicants for credit by contract must follow all of the instructions below carefully; incomplete or improperly crafted contracts will not be considered. All contracts will be reviewed by the course instructor, the Honors Program Director, and often a faculty member of the Honors Program Advisory Committee, who will together decide upon approval.

Honors contract proposals must be submitted to the **course instructor** no later than the end of the first week of class and to the **Honors Program Director** no later than the end of the third week of class in order to be reviewed.

- While the student is expected to consult with the instructor of the course in designing a contract, it is the responsibility of the student to craft the contract itself.
- The Honors Program Director and other reviewers will either (a) accept the proposal as is, (b) accept the proposal with amendments, or (c) reject the proposal outright.
- Credit for completing the course (with any letter grade) and Honors credit are independent of one another. That is, a student may earn full credit for completing course requirements without successfully fulfilling the Honors contract. However, the student must pass the course with a grade of B or better in order to earn Honors credit, even if all requirements of the contract are met.
- In order to ensure a reasonable workload for faculty, instructors may enter into **at most five (5)** Honors contracts per course section.

Questions about the instructions below or any other aspect of the Honors contract process can be directed to the Honors Program Director, Graham Reynolds (honors@unca.edu).

To the student crafting this contract: please submit honors contracts completed as indicated below to your course instructor, who will then forward it to the Honors Program Director.

Student and Course Information. The student completing the Honors contract must provide the following information:

- Student's name
- Student's ID number
- Student's email
- Student's Honors membership: are you currently a member of the Honors Program?
- Student's class standing (*e.g.*, first-year, sophomore, *etc.*)
- Course prefix and number
- Course name
- Term in which the course is offered (*e.g.*, "Fall 2018")
- Instructor's name

Proposed Work. The student completing the contract must write a brief (200-400 words) narrative description of the work to be completed in order that they earn Honors credit.

Note. The proposed work must supplement and complement the work already required for the course. The work must not simply be "more"; rather, it must be meaningfully integrated with the course content and learning goals and the work the course already requires. Ideally, the proposed work should involve active, student-guided, experiential learning.

As noted, the narrative should make clear how the contracted work meaningfully builds upon required work. Please see the final section of this document for examples of potential work.

Timeline and Structure. The student completing the contract must give a brief timeline of the work, indicating how it will be structured throughout the semester. This timeline should also indicate how the work will be responded to and assessed by the instructor, providing at least two midterm “milestones” at which the student and instructor will meet to discuss the student’s progress toward completing contracted work.

End-of-Term Reflection. In order to receive Honors credit via contract, the student must complete an end-of-term reflection on the work they have performed for Honors credit. This reflection must provide more than a summary of the student’s work; in particular, it must include a “metacognitive” component, in which the student explains how the contracted work helped them to gain a better understanding of the content the course treats. *The end-of-term reflection is due to the course instructor and the Honors Program Director no later than the last day of class.*

Granting of Honors credit. The student will be notified whether Honors credit is to be granted no later than the date on which final grades are due in a given semester. Please note that students may successfully complete no more than two Honors contracts. In particular, no more than 8 hours of contracted Honors credit can be applied toward the 21 hours required to graduate with Distinction as a University Honors Scholar, and no more than 4 hours of contracted Honors credit can be applied toward the 11 hours required to graduate with Recognition as an Honors Scholar.

Examples of potential Honors contract projects. The examples of Honors contract projects given below are meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Honors credit may be granted for any sort of work deemed appropriate by the course’s instructor and other reviewers of the contract, including any combination of the work suggested below.

- *Scholarship or creative work (as appropriate).* A student might be asked to perform research about some aspect of the course, above and beyond the expectations of other students. In some courses, it might be appropriate to ask students to complete some sort of creative project not expected of others. As noted above, these projects should not simply be “more”; they should reinforce the learning goals of the course and enrich the experience of the student doing this work.
- *Community engagement (as appropriate).* If the course is one with a natural connection to the community, it might be appropriate to ask the student to engage with the community in some way that helps the student to achieve the course’s learning goals. Community-directed service and scholarship offer experiential opportunities that are frequently worthy of bestowing honors credit.
- *Other experiential learning.* Other experiential opportunities may present themselves, depending on the instructor’s and student’s plans for the semester: internships and other work experiences, travel (even if not organized as formal study abroad or study away); presentation at conferences, symposia, *etc.*, and similar practices can meaningfully enrich the student’s learning.
- *Student leadership in and outside of class.* In order to earn honors credit, a student might be called upon to plan and lead (to a greater extent than expected of other students) in-class, extracurricular, or co-curricular activities related to the course and its content.