

How to Propose an Honors Course Contract

What is an Honors Contract? Honors students (sophomores and above) may petition the HPC to grant Honors course recognition for a specially designed contract in a non-Honors course (“the Honors contract”). The Honors contract will be developed by the student in consultation with the course instructor, and must clearly reflect at least one of the pedagogical goals of the Honors Program:

Learning in Community—We believe that learning with friends in small classes is the best way to succeed academically and personally.

Active Learning—Honors courses are lively seminar-based discussions. Many include service and experiential learning such as community service, fieldtrips, concerts, and plays.

Transformative Experiences—The Honors Program challenges students to reach beyond their comfort level, to try new things in a process of self-discovery.

The Honors Contract can meet one or more of these goals in a variety of ways, depending on a course’s subject matter, the talents and interests of the student, and the involvement of other Honors Program students.

Requirements. The following specific requirements should be observed:

1. Students interested in Honors recognition for a 4-credit non-Honors course should contact the instructor as soon as possible after the start of the semester in which the course is to be given to discuss the possibility of completing Honors contract work.
2. Students must be sophomores (> than 32 credits) or above. Freshmen are not eligible to submit contract proposals.
3. Eligible courses include any *non-introductory* Merrimack course (1000 level courses are not eligible) taught in the day division during the regular academic year. Summer and evening courses and courses taught at other institutions will not normally be eligible.
4. Students will normally be limited to taking no more than one contract course as part of the required eight Honors courses. Honors contracts should not be used as a way to avoid taking available Honors courses, even if those are of less interest to the student.
5. Students are required to attend a mandatory Honors Contract Workshop.
6. Courses approved for Honors recognition will be noted on the student’s transcript.
7. Students are highly encouraged to upload final projects/papers onto ScholarWorks.

Preparing the Contract Proposal. Students must recognize that an Honors contract in a non-Honors course imposes an extra burden on the instructor. The student will therefore assume primary responsibility for preparing the description of the Honors contract and for submitting it to the Honors Program Director for evaluation.

1. The proposal should include as a cover sheet a completed Honors Contract Form, signed by both the student and the professor.
2. A proposal outlining the Honors contract should be submitted to the Honors Program Director by the initial due date. The proposal (approximately 1 single-spaced page) should include four parts: a) a description of the work to be undertaken, including timetable and identification of any special materials needed; b) an explanation of how the proposed Honors contract goes beyond the regular course syllabus in a way satisfying at least one of the Program’s pedagogical goals listed above; c) how the results of the project will be disseminated to others (e.g., class members, other students, the larger academic or non-academic community); d) how the work will be evaluated by the professor upon completion.
3. The Honors Contract Form, the Proposal Narrative, and the course syllabus need to be scanned as ONE pdf document and registered via the Honors Contract Registration Google Form by noon on the semester due date.
4. All work for the Honors contract must be completed and submitted to the instructor for grading by **the final class day of the semester.**
5. The student must submit to the Honors Program Manager a one-page summary report of the contract work, signed by the instructor, **by the last day of the final exam period.**
6. Students submitting a proposal agree that successful proposals and submitted work/summaries can be made available to other students as models and guides for future Honors contract proposals, including both current and prospective Honors students.

7. If two or more Honors students would like to formulate an Honors contract for a course, they can collaborate on a proposal with the course instructor. The same guidelines above apply. Each student who completes the Honors Contract will receive a notation on their transcript next to the corresponding course to indicate they took it as an Honors course.

Honors Contract Form

Student Name _____

Student ID# _____

(Please circle) Sophomore Junior Senior

Semester/Year of Graduation _____

Student's Major(s) _____

Student's Minor(s) _____

Purpose. The Honors Contract option allows students in the Honors Program to earn honors course recognition for 4-credit, non-honors courses above the introductory level taken during the fall or spring semester in which an honors section is not offered. Please consult the Honors Contract Policy for further details and requirements before submitting your proposal.

Project title: _____ Semester _____

Course Number and Title (please include syllabus): _____

Faculty Member's Name _____

Dept _____

Abstract: In the space below, please describe the essential elements of your project and its expected results.

Proposal Narrative (about 300 words): On a separate page, please describe your project in more detail. The proposal should include four parts: a) a description of the work to be undertaken, including timetable and identification of any special materials needed; b) an explanation of how the proposed Honors contract goes beyond the regular course syllabus in a way satisfying at least one of the Program's three pedagogical goals listed on the Honors Contract Policy; c) how the results of the project will be disseminated to others (e.g., class members, other students, the larger academic or non-academic community); d) how the work will be evaluated by the professor upon completion.

Student Signature

Date

Faculty Signature

Date

Submission Process:

The Honors Contract Proposal, the Proposal Narrative, and course syllabus need to be scanned as ONE pdf document and registered via the Honors Contract Registration Google Form by noon on the semester due date. Incomplete registration or scans will not be processed.