

What is an Honors contract?

The contract is a mutual agreement between the Honors student and the faculty member on a project or activity that will allow a particular course to be custom designated as “Honors” on the student’s transcript.



Can an Honors contract be developed for any WCU course?

Yes, including internships and distance/online courses. Whether or not a particular course will work for an Honors contract is ultimately the instructor’s decision.

Who can do an Honors contract?

A student must be a member of The Honors College to take advantage of Honors contracts. Students currently on probation in The Honors College (due to grades or lack of Honors progress) may complete Honors contract work during their probation semester in order to continue to make progress and improve their GPA and standing. Students who were previous members but have been removed from the college due to grades or lack of Honors progress are ineligible for contract work.

What determines the credit hours for an Honors contract?

Honors credit is always attached to the credit hours for the course (for example, an Honors contract for a three-hour course would be for three credit hours).

What is the procedure for an Honors Contract?

1. The student is responsible for initiating the contract at the start of the semester by meeting with the instructor. The student and instructor will collaborate on the project idea and description.
2. The student will fill out and submit the Contract Initiation form (Form 1) online.
3. The student will receive an email confirming receipt of the Contract Initiation form (Form 1) that will include the information the student entered in order to check for any errors. That email will also provide a link to the Project Description form (Form 2). The faculty member will also receive an email informing them that the student has initiated the contract.
4. The student will fill out and submit the Project Description form (Form 2) online. *NOTE – It is STRONGLY recommended, but not required, that the student enter and SAVE this information into the Project Description form template available on The Honors College website.
5. The student will receive an email confirming receipt of the Project Description form (Form 2) that will include the information the student entered to check for any errors. The faculty member will also receive an email containing the information entered by the student.
6. The Honors Dean will review the contract and will contact the student with any revisions needed before final approval.
7. The Dean approves the contract and it is recorded.
8. The student submits the work agreed upon in the contract to the instructor by the established deadline, but no later than the last class meeting of the semester.
9. The Honors College will send a memo of completion to the instructor. The instructor will return the form (usually via campus mail) noting whether or not the contract was completed.

10. If the contract has been completed, The Honors College will inform the Registrar and the particular course for the individual student will be marked as “Honors” on the student’s transcript. The hours will be recorded by The Honors College as hours toward the completion of The Honors College diploma. If the contract was not completed, the student will not earn Honors credit for the course.

What is a “good” Honors contract?

The best contracts are of mutual interest to the student and faculty member and should:

- Involve a project or activity that takes one deeper into the course subject and results in an experience relevant to one’s preparation as a professional.
- Engage the student in higher levels of thinking and performance (i.e. synthesis, creation, evaluation, analysis) over a sustained period of time or over the course of the entire semester for advanced courses (at the 200, 300, or 400 levels), or involve lower cognitive domains (i.e. recall, understanding, application) over a shorter amount of time for introductory courses (at the 100 or possibly 200 levels).
- When possible, invite a student to participate in undergraduate research or begin a research agenda within a major.
- Depending on the discipline, invite a student to work on a creative project beyond the regular scope of the course (in theatre, art, or creative writing for example).
- If applicable, involve a service project relevant to the course and/or the student’s major.
- If applicable, involve a student honing teaching/presentation skills through a presentation of out-of-class material to the class or an external group.
- When possible, result in a presentation of creative work or research results at the Undergraduate Expo, a regional conference, or the National Conference on Undergraduate Research.
- Allow the faculty member an opportunity to try innovative or professionally interesting projects or activities that would be difficult to do for an entire class.
- Be commensurate with the number of credits earned (e.g. a contract in a 4 credit hour course should be more involved than a contract in a 3 credit hour course).

What is a “bad” contract?

Contracts most likely to present problems usually:

- Are “busy work” (taking an extra quiz, for example).
- Are of little or no interest to the student or faculty member.
- Have no clear connection to the course content.
- Have little or no tangible outcome.
- Are described so vaguely that the outcome is confusing to the student.
- Under no circumstance will a contract be approved for work already accomplished.

More questions about Honors contracts?

Please call The Honors College office at 828-227-7383 or consult The Honors College website at honors.wcu.edu.