**Honors Contracts**

**Guidelines for Students and Faculty:**

*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. Please see the Honors Contract forms [**here**](http://www.wcu.edu/5508.asp).

*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?*

Students must be current Honors students **in good standing** (not removed from the college due to grades or lack of Honors progress) to take advantage of Honors contracts.

*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.** Between the beginning of the course and the **sixth week of the semester**, the student is responsible for initiating the contract by meeting with the instructor and proposing an idea for the contract. The instructor will accept the idea, modify it, or suggest another idea for the contract.

**2.** The student completes the Honors Contract form, including a brief description of the proposed project or activity, and both the student and professor sign and date the form.

**3.** The student brings the form to The Honors College Office in HC 101 Balsam Hall.

**4.** The Honors dean reviews the contract and will contact the student or faculty member if there is a problem or concern (this is rare).

**5.** The dean signs the contract and it is recorded.

6. The student submits the work agreed upon in the contract to the instructor before the last class meeting or other deadline established by the instructor.

**7.** 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.

**8.** 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 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. Ideally, Honors contracts:

* Allow the Honors student to engage more deeply in a particular area of interest in the course.
* Allow the faculty member to try a new or innovative assignment that might prove useful for the general population in future classes.
* 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).
* Might involve a particular service project relevant to the course and/or the student’s major.
* Might 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.

*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.
* Have little or no tangible outcome.
* Are described so vaguely that the outcome is confusing to the student (i.e., “student will do an extra paper” or “student will read extra material”).

*More questions about Honors contracts?*

Please call The Honors College office at 828.227-7383 or email Brian Railsback (brailsba@wcu.edu).