



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT HONOR CONTRACTS FOR FACULTY



Just what is an honors contract?

An honors contract is an individual agreement between an honors student and a professor stating that the student will complete an enriched curriculum to receive honors credit for an upper-division Letters & Science course.

What do students enjoy about honors contracts?

Students enjoy the opportunity to delve into a subject and acquire a more complete knowledge of a specific topic. Just as important to students is the opportunity to form a lasting relationship with their professors.

How do students choose which professors to ask to participate in an honors contract?

Most students choose a professor either because they are interested in the subject matter that the course covers, they would like to work more closely with a specific professor, or both.

What should honors contract students expect from me?

Students enter into honors contracts to find mentors among the faculty. Weekly meetings with your honors contract students will allow you to serve in this way as you review your students' progress and evaluate their work.

What kind of work might the student do to receive honors credit for the course?

Since the work required to complete an honors contract merely supplements the work assigned in a course, students should not be expected to take on the work of an entire additional course. Students may do extra readings to be discussed in weekly meetings with their professor. Others might agree to write an additional short paper or two, to write a slightly longer term paper than other students in the class, or to spend an additional 10-15 hours in the laboratory during the quarter.

How does an honors contract differ from an independent studies (198, 199) course?

Whereas a student receives academic credit for an independent studies course, honors contracts transform the regular units received in the course into honors-designated units. No additional units are earned for work done through an honors contract. If the student earns a B or higher in the course, however, the honors-designated units will be acknowledged on the student's record and will be counted toward fulfillment of the requirements for the completion of the College Honors Program. Students who complete the program receive the College of Letters and Science Honors Program Academic Excellence Award at commencement in recognition of their distinguished academic achievement.

What are some of the benefits of an honors contract, both for me and for the student?

Honors contracts give you personal contact with some of the college's most motivated students. Some faculty members find that because students seek out faculty with scholarly interests similar to their own, honor contract assignments often provides important new data for faculty research. Students enter into honors contracts to enrich their experience in a course, allowing them to delve more deeply into course materials and to benefit from the mentoring faculty members can provide.

How can I participate in the program?

A student may approach you either before the quarter begins or during the first few days of instruction to discuss the possibility of establishing an honors contract. If you agree, you and the student will formulate an honors curriculum, and the student will submit an honors contract proposal to the college by the end of the second week of instruction. At the end of the quarter, you will receive an email asking whether the student has satisfactorily completed the honors contract assignment. It is important that you reply to the email by the date final grade reports are submitted to the Office of the Registrar.

Where should I direct other questions I might have about honors contracts?

If you have more questions or would like to see samples of honors contracts, please contact the Honors Program at honorsmail@LTSC.ucsb.edu.