

Honors Contract Instructions and Information

Grossmont College

What is an Honors Contract?

An honors contract enriches a non-honors class by establishing an intensive course of study for a deeper understanding of the class. An honors contract also encourages student creativity through creation of alternative projects and close consultation with the instructor. In order to create an honors contract, the instructor and student discuss and agree upon assignments, projects and criteria according to the guidelines given in this packet of materials. Unit credit remains the same as for a regular class, but the honors designation is provided in the transcript.

Note that an honors contract, once made, is *binding* (i.e. cannot be cancelled later in the semester). If for any reason you do poorly in your honors work but get an “A” in the regular class work, you may end up with a lower grade overall “with honors” noted on your transcript, but with a corresponding lower grade point assignment for the class.

What are the Benefits?

An honors contract provides the following benefits and more:

- Students explore a subject of interest to them in greater depth through creative projects, laboratory work, library research, service-learning and/or consultative research with other agencies.
- Students will have an enriched curriculum which will give a more global perspective, increase awareness of the importance of research, and develop leadership skills.
- Students will have opportunities to publish and present their work through the HTCC conference and other avenues.
- Students will have an edge when transferring through honors transfer agreements.

How Do I Initiate an Honors Contract?

As a student who wants to do an honors contract, you, along with your instructor, are responsible for moving through the following process:

- Come to an agreement with your professor to do the honors contract together.
- Create an honors learning contract syllabus with your professor with a written summary of specific in-depth assignments beyond the regular course curriculum. Criteria for these assignments are included below.
- Documents must be submitted to the Honors Program Coordinator, John Oakes (room 3226 or in the GC mail room) by the end of the third week of the semester. No exceptions. Documents to be submitted will include:
 - Honors Contract form, signed by the instructor (see below)
 - Regular course syllabus
 - Honors learning contract
 - Attributes/Criteria form (see below)
 - Evidence of honors program eligibility or completed honors program application (see form below).
- If your application is accepted, you will be reassigned by the registrar to a different section of the same course—one which is designated as honors. This is done by the Honors Program and is not your responsibility.

For any questions about the process or advice about how to put together an honors contract, contact Dr. Amy Ramos, room 70-209 or phone (619) 644-7562.

Notes to Instructors on Developing Honors Contracts

1. If you are interested in your students doing honors contracts, consider mentioning that fact in your course syllabus.
2. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the writing of a contract and to submit all forms to the Honors Coordinator, including evidence of at least a 3.2 GPA.
3. The Honors committee will look carefully at the honors contract proposal, but it will be assumed that primary responsibility for making the contract honors-worthy will lie with the instructor.
4. Credit for the honors-specific work should be included with credit earned along with the other students in the rest of the course to compute a single overall grade. A suggestion is to make the honors work count for 20-25% of the total grade, as we state in the note to the students that the honors work will be an additional $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ more effort above and beyond the regular work for the course.
5. Be aware that your honors contract student will be formally enrolled in a separate section of the course. This is done by the Honors Program and is not your responsibility. His or her grade will be submitted along with the rest of the students in the class and will not require any extra paperwork on your part.