

CALS Honors Course Contracts

The [CALS Honors Program](#) requires students to complete an orientation course, two upper-division courses for honors credit, a project, and a thesis based on the project. To the extent possible, we try to integrate honors course work into the student's major to enhance the quality of their undergraduate experience without adding extra credits to their restricted schedules. The Honors Contract allows students this flexibility. This document provides some guidelines for the Honors Contract process.

How the honors contract works:

- Within the first three weeks of the semester, student and professor agree on how to structure the contract and jointly complete the [honors contract form](#).
- Student takes the form to their Departmental Honors Coordinator for comment and approval, and this person forwards the form to the CALS Honors Program Director for final approval.
- CALS opens a separate section of the course for the student, and the title of the course is modified by placing 'Honors' in front of it. Student is moved to this section.
- Professor submits the final grade for the student for the honors section.

What an honors contract should and *should not* be:

- It should enhance the quality of the learning experience in the course, rather than simply increasing the quantity of work performed. In most cases, a higher quality experience will require more time and effort, so Honors students will indeed be working harder.
- It should hone the student's critical thinking, writing, and presentation skills in addition to enhancing their grasp of the subject matter.
- It should enhance interaction between the student and the professor.
- It should not be burdensome to the professor in terms of time or resources.
- It must constitute a minimum of 20% of the student's grade in the course.

Some ideas for contracts that have worked well:

- Student participates in lab meetings and/or research with professor and grad students on course topic.
- Student attends and summarizes seminars on campus related on course topic.
- Student does independent reading on the topic with guidance from professor, and then presents analysis (either oral or written, to professor or to class).
- Student helps professor develop lecture(s), lab exercise(s), or multimedia on course topic.
- Student helps with web design, publication writing/revision, or other extension-related activities on course topic.

Questions? Contact Matt Brannan, CALS Honors Program Assistant, brannanm@ufl.edu