Honors Contract Option: Frequently Asked Questions

What is an Honors Contract? It is a faculty-mentored semester-long project that complements a particular course in which the student is already enrolled. Contracts can take the form of research papers, class presentations and lectures, supplemental bibliographies with a literature review or other related projects, undergraduate research with a faculty member, or creative or artistic activities. All contracts must generate a project that is evaluated for a grade. The project should be designed to complement the student’s honors portfolio. The contract is not designed to be a simple extension of the course (i.e. a 15-page paper where the other enrolled students are writing a 10-page paper).

Why do an Honors Contract? Honors contracts at Minnesota State Mankato are designed to allow for more variety and flexibility in an honors student’s busy schedule. They also allow the student to develop leadership, research, and global citizenship competencies in courses related to their major or minor.

Who is eligible to complete an Honors Contract? Any honors student can complete a contract. Students can use up to 9 credits of honors contract courses as a substitute for 9 credits of their honors general education requirement. Contracted courses can be at any level of the curriculum. Contract courses do not substitute for Honors seminars (401 courses). Students may only contract one course per semester.

What is the professor’s responsibility? Professors are responsible for assisting in the design of the project and mentoring the project through the semester. Professors should not offer “extra credit” for the project; instead, they should incorporate the project into the regular grading method for the course.

How much work is required for an Honors Contract? Students should meet with their professor to discuss their projects at least once per month. 2-3 hours per week spent on the project would be a reasonable time commitment on the part of the student.

How do I apply to have an Honors Contract approved? Meet with your professor and the Honors Program Director to discuss your proposal. Once you have established a project, complete an Honors Contract Proposal form by the end of the first week of classes.

How do I receive credit for my Honors Contract? Students must submit an end-of-semester summary report, signed by their instructor, and receive a grade of ‘B’ or above in their course. To receive credit, the summary report must be submitted by the last day of the semester. No honors credit will be reported on the student’s transcript for Honors Contract courses. Records of Honors Contracts will be maintained internally within the Honors Program Office.