Reading Area Community College Honors Program

HONORS CONTRACT GUIDELINES

What is an Honors contract?

An Honors contract is an instructional agreement whereby a student earns Honors credit through enrichment of a standard, non-Honors course (3 credit minimum).

The student collaborates with the course professor to identify the specific activities for the Honors contract. When all the regular course and additional contract activities are successfully completed, an "Honors" designation will be added to the course on the student's academic transcript.

What are guidelines for planning an Honors contract?

- The student and professor are encouraged to think creatively in planning the Honors contract project. An Honors contract may involve exploratory inquiry, artistic activity, in-depth research, or practical applications of course concepts and skills.

- The contract proposal needs to include a preliminary list of sources, contacts, and locations related to the proposed activities, the anticipated final presentation format, and a plan to share the project outcomes at RACC or elsewhere (such as the Berks County Undergrad Research and Creativity Conference, HECBC).

- It is highly recommended that the student completes all regular course requirements separate from the Honors contract. Therefore, the student is eligible to receive a course grade, even while continuing to work on the contract. In the rare case where contract activities substitute for standard activities, this plan should be explained clearly in the Honors contract proposal.

- The proposal may be submitted any time during the semester.

- The project needs to be of appropriate scope to enable the student to complete it by the beginning of the semester following the semester in which the course was taken.

- Research involving human subjects requires IRB (Internal Review Board) approval. Contact Professor Danelle Bower (dbower@racc.edu) for guidance.

Who is eligible to earn Honors credit by contract?

Any student who meets the criteria for taking Honors courses may earn credit by contract. Students are eligible to take Honors courses with a 3.25 GPA (exclusive of Foundation courses) or permission of the professor.

What are the procedures to arrange for an Honors contract?

First, the student MUST request the professor's agreement to supervise an Honors contract. Professors may decline any request as they are under no obligation to supervise contracts. Students are strongly encouraged to seek the professor's agreement prior to registering for the course in

which they plan to earn Honors credit by contract.
Next, in collaboration with the supervising professor, the student needs to prepare a written proposal statement. This statement will explain in detail the proposed activities and include a preliminary list of sources, contacts, and locations related to the proposed activities, the anticipated final presentation format, and a plan to share the project outcomes at Reading Area Community College or elsewhere (such as the Berks County Undergrad Research and Creativity Conference, HECBC).

Finally, the completed Honors contract form and written proposal statement need to be submitted to the Honors Program Coordinator by the student. The student is responsible for obtaining all required signatures. The original form and proposal statement will be kept in the Honors Program Office and copies will be forwarded to the student and the supervising professor.

What are the procedures to receive Honors credit by contract?

When the student has satisfactorily completed the Honors contract activities, the supervising professor will sign at the bottom of the Honors contract form and prepare a written evaluation of the student's Honors work. This signed form and the written evaluation need be submitted to the Honors Program Coordinator by the professor. The Honors Program Coordinator will submit the complete form and evaluation to the Records Office. The Records Office will add an "Honors" designation to the course on the student's transcript. Students usually complete their Honors contract by the beginning of the semester following the semester in which the course was taken.

Contact the Honors Program Coordinator, Dr. Pamela Blakely, for further guidance at pblakely@racc.edu