



## GUIDE TO HONORS CONTRACTS

An honors contract allows students in the University Honors Program to earn honors credit in a non-honors course.

### Eligibility for an Honors Contract

- Classes at the 3000-level or above can be used for contracts. Normally those classes do not include internships, departmental independent studies, selected topics, and the like. UHP students should make every effort to use conversion contracts in courses in their majors.
- Honors contracts may be used in any semester.
- Any faculty member may work with UHP students who wish to complete an honors contract at the discretion of the faculty member.

### Proposal and Approval Process

- Virtually any course at AUM at the 3000-level or above may be taken for honors credit except those which have an honors equivalent. Departments and schools may identify courses that are or are not suitable for conversion to honors credit.
- *Additional work alone is not equivalent to honors work.* Students should be sure that honors contracts include a proposal that will take them **deeper into course materials**, provide a **breadth of understanding** that is beyond the regular course's scope, or give them an experience that materially enhances normal course goals, engaging with the material in ways that are demonstrably **more complex** than what is expected of traditional students in the same course.  
Successful proposals will include explicit connections between the details of the contract and one or more UHP outcomes: **critical/creative thinking, teamwork and leadership, and global citizenship.**
- *All honors contracts must include a written component.* A PowerPoint presentation might be accompanied by a substantive essay summarizing research findings; a creative work might be accompanied by an explanation of the aesthetic principles employed and the student's rationale for choosing a particular medium; etc.
- Using the form provided, students must bring proposal to the UHP office in 801 Ida Belle Young Library Tower no later than Friday of the third week of classes. All required signatures must be completed (student, instructor) prior to submitting the contract form.

The UHP Director has final authority over whether a contract is approved; students will be notified if contracts are not approved.

### **Additional Information about Honors Contracts**

- The UHP will not approve contracts deemed inappropriate or lacking in the quality or quantity of work necessary for honors credit.
- A student's course grade is determined entirely by the content of the syllabus. The honors project is a pass/fail project that does not impact the student's grade.
- Students will earn honors credit only if they complete the honors contract satisfactorily *and* earn a grade of A or B in the course.
- The honors contract will not generate any additional credit beyond those hours for the related course. For example, a 3-hour course will become a 3-hour honors course.
- At the end of each semester, the UHP will ask faculty for confirmation that the contract was completed.
- A grade of "I" (Incomplete) is not normally appropriate for an honors contract.
- It is students' responsibility to propose course conversion projects; faculty members are not responsible for designing projects for course conversion.



# SAMPLE

*Indians of North America* is a course focused on Native Americans, their aboriginal arrival into the Americas, and their lifestyles, cultures, and practices today. Since my major at Other University is Pre-Medicine, I would like to conduct research on the medical aspect of these people's lives. I intend to review their medical backgrounds, their diseases before and after European contact, and their practices to cure these illnesses. Centering my work on artifacts uncovered during Other University archaeological digs at the Remote River site over the past four years, my major task will involve making a comprehensive listing of those artifacts which had possibly been used for medical purposes. This honors-level research will build on work I have completed in other Anthropology courses, especially my two summers' participation in digs at that site. I will summarize my analyses and findings in a 5-10 page essay, and will give a presentation based on my research to the class at the end of the semester and at the Southern Regional Honors Conference in April. The research I will conduct connects to the UHP outcome of Independent Thinking, and the content area on which I would focus connects to the UHP outcome of Awareness of Diversity.

This sample course conversion proposal was made by an honors student in a program at another university. What makes it strong is:

- a description of the course in which she is enrolled
- a description of how her proposed work will fit the course content and make her engagement with course materials deeper, broader, and more complex
- a specific plan of approach/method
- specific plans to use the results of her work
- explicit connection between her proposal and the program's outcomes (at AUM, the UHP outcomes are critical/creative thinking, teamwork and leadership, and global citizenship)