****

**GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPING AN HONORS CONTRACT**

The Honors Contract provides an option for RWU Honors students to extend and deepen their participation in a non-honors course into an Honors experience. It generally involves replacing one or more learning activities in the non-honors course with one(s) that represents the challenge of the Honors Program but can also involve additional work of an independent nature.

The National Collegiate Honors Council has identified [significant features of an honors course](http://nchc.site-ym.com/?page=coursedesign). This document incorporates that information into the RWU Honors Program mission, to provide a guide to developing and implementing an Honors Contract.

Upon completion of the Honors Contract course, students should be able to:

* Analyze knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from the course, making relevant connections to the public sphere and to one's participation in community life as a professional and as a citizen.
* Critically reflect upon the course and its co-curricular engagement in light of the student’s broader Honors experience and the role of knowledge as service.

The Honors Contractis co-written by the student and the instructor and must be approved by the Curriculum subcommittee of the Honors Advisory Council. It should provide answers to questions such as the following:

* How does the honors part of the course extend or deepen the honors student’s learning experience in the non-honors course?
* What honors outcomes will be addressed in the course? How will the outcomes enrich the student’s honors learning?
* How will the honors work be assessed?
* What co-curricular event(s) (if any) have you designated for the course? How do these events enhance and/or deepen the student’s engagement with the course or material?

The student and the instructor should collaboratively complete and sign the Honors Contract form. In the supporting documentation, the student and faculty member should agree on the issues described in the questions listed above.

Here are some suggested ways of providing unique or extra challenges for the Honors Contract (adapted from Miami U Honors Program):

* Directed readings and focused discussions with the instructor accompanied by an academic blog or journal on readings and assignments
* Independent or collaborative research-oriented project where the student is a co-investigator
* Extensive literature review or annotated bibliography
* Development of supplementary course materials (PPT slides, handouts, curricula, lesson plans, etc.)
* Service learning project tied to the aims of the course which includes a reflective component
* Multimedia project
* Assignment encouraging the use or understanding of research methods
* Reflective learning portfolio
* Intensive, substantive writing assignment—ideally designed for presentation and/or publication

This is meant to be a set of guidelines, not a rigid formula, so anyone writing an Honors Contract should feel free to adjust them as appropriate. The main purpose to keep in mind when crafting an Honors Contract is to enrich a student’s learning in a standard course by challenging her not necessarily with just more work, but with deeper, more qualitatively substantive approaches to course content and assignments.