

Honors Committee Bylaws

Section I - Honors Committee

Purpose Statement: The purpose of the Honors Program is to give students the opportunity to earn recognition for academic achievement in their program of study at Oklahoma State University – Oklahoma City (OSU-OKC). The designation of Honors credit on a student’s transcript indicates that the student exhibited superior scholarship and pursued knowledge beyond the scope of the regular course of study in non-Honors classes.

Membership

The Honors Committee shall be composed of the Committee Chair and Co-Chair, both faculty, as well as six faculty members, and a student representative.

Terms of Appointment

Faculty appointments are made through normal committee processes as described in the Committee Handbook. Student representatives must meet the requirements for eligibility to participate in the Honors Program. Students shall serve a term of one academic year and they may be reappointed.

Responsibilities

The Honors Committee shall:

- Function as a standing campus committee.
- Review applications and select students admitted to the Honors Program.
- Communicate to students decisions for selection, retention, or dismissal to the program.
- Recommend policy to the AVPAA concerning course requirements and other criteria for Honors Program awards.
- Represent the interests and concerns of faculty and students concerning the Honors Program.
- Review faculty proposals for Honors courses.

Section 2 – Honors Program Eligibility

Application for Admission

Students must apply and be accepted into the Honors Program at OSU-OKC. Electronic applications can be found on OSU-OKC's Honors website: <https://osuokc.edu/honors> or by contacting the Honors Committee Chair: okc.honors@okstate.edu.

Admission Timeline

Applicants must apply for admittance into the Honors Program. Students applying for admittance into the Honors Program must complete an electronic application and provide any required documentation, preferably within the first two weeks of the semester. Students who submit their applications within the first two weeks of the semester will be notified of the committee's decision by the end of the third week of the semester. Late applications may be reviewed at the committee's discretion.

Acceptance and Academic Integrity Oath

Upon acceptance to the Honors Program, students will watch an "Academic Integrity" video and sign an oath of integrity.

Eligibility for Freshmen and New Students

All applicants to the Honors Program must have completed all remedial classes for consideration.

A new freshman must have an ACT composite score of 23 or higher, or a high school grade point average of 3.5 or higher. Students other than freshmen, but new to the Honors Program, will be eligible on the basis of their cumulative GPA:

Fewer than 30 college-level hours: 3.00 minimum cumulative GPA

Thirty or more college-level hours: 3.25 minimum cumulative GPA

Students who do not meet the minimum eligibility criteria may petition to the committee for acceptance. A petition is a letter from the applicant, requesting Honors acceptance based on other merits, documentation, or rationale.

Continuing Eligibility for Returning Students

Returning students must continue to maintain minimum GPA to remain eligible for the Honors Program. Continued eligibility requirements for students with previous college credit are as follows:

Fewer than 30 college-level hours: 3.00 minimum cumulative GPA

Thirty or more college-level hours: 3.25 minimum cumulative GPA

At the committee's discretion, students who petitioned for acceptance and were below the minimum GPA for eligibility may be granted extra time to bring their GPA up to the minimum for continued eligibility.

Transfer Honors Credit

Students who have transferred from other institutions may count up to a maximum of 9 transfer Honors credit hours with a minimum earned grade of "B" (or its equivalent). The remaining 6 Honors credit hours must be earned in residence.

Section 3 – Honors Courses and Contracts

Once admitted into the Honors Program, the student is recognized as an Honors student and may enroll in Honors courses or complete an Honors contract to earn honors credit for a non-honors course.

Honors Courses

Definition: An honors course is any undergraduate course or section designated as such by the institution.

Faculty Teaching Honors Courses.

Only qualified faculty approved by the department head may teach honors courses.

Content and Grading in Honors Courses.

Honors courses may well cover more sophisticated material than that covered in the regular sections of the same course. More active student participation should be encouraged. The method of evaluation of students' work (examinations, reports, etc.) may also be different. Students who meet the challenge of an Honors course should have this reflected in their grades, but there should be no hesitation to award low grades to Honors students who do not live up to the expectations which are being met by other Honors students.

Honors Contracts

An Honors contract is a mechanism for adding an "Honors dimension" to a course or section which is not already an Honors course. Students wishing to earn Honors credit for a non-Honors course must complete an extra project for the course, such as a research paper or conference-style poster presentation.

The student is responsible for identifying a potential project and submitting a written proposal/project summary to their instructor for initial approval as early as possible in the semester to allow for timely completion of the project and recording of grades. Honors contracts are designed to be vehicles whereby students explore deeper content within a subject, under the guidance of a content expert. As such, all Honors projects must exceed the minimum requirements set for the course and must expound upon existing course/program outcomes/goals. The contract project should add an academic dimension to the course by introducing new material or by allowing the student to go into greater depth than normally required in some aspect of the course.

As the experts on their courses, instructors are responsible for verifying that proposed Honors projects are indeed relevant to the course and demonstrate significant effort above and beyond

the minimum course requirements. The contract must be supervised by the faculty member and must be approved by the Honors Committee.

Identifying a Project.

Students should collaborate with their instructors to identify an appropriate project. All Honors projects must be centered around a course-related topic, use documented research, and entail approximately 7-8 hours of work *per credit hour* for the course. Thus, an Honors contract for a 3-credit-hour course should represent about 21-24 hours (1.5-2 hours per week) of additional work, while an Honors contract for an 8-credit-hour course should represent about 56-64 hours (3-5 hours per week) of additional work.

The Honors contract is designed to foster creativity in projects, as long as they are acceptable to the Honors student, the faculty instructor, and the Honors Committee. The examples given below are not intended to limit the scope or nature of projects devised by students and professors. Projects may consist of several individual components. To determine an appropriate length for written projects, a good rule of thumb is to calculate each written page (excluding title pages and bibliographies) as representing about 3 hours' worth of work. When the written project is accompanied by other components such as laboratory work or the creation of media or presentations, the written project may be shortened to account for the amount of work required to complete the other elements in the project.

- A research-supported essay (approximately 3 pages per credit hour)
- A research-supported essay accompanied by a presentation of the essay (to the class, at a conference, or in the form of a poster or video)
- An original empirical research report
- A series of written critiques on newspaper, magazine, or journal articles, or speakers on the course topic
- An original computer program or project
- Creation and distribution of pamphlets, posters, educational videos, and/or websites, accompanied by a brief research-supported essay discussing the target audience's need for these resources
- Additional laboratory experiments or mathematical problems, followed by a written report
- A review of computer software related to the course, followed by a written report
- A creative project, such as a collection of poems, a literary work, a piece of visual art, or a recorded performance, presented with a brief report (including documented sources) explaining how the project connects to the course concept

For projects that do not involve research-supported papers, the documented research may take the form of a type-written bibliography to be turned in with the project. All papers should adhere to Essay Guidelines for Honors, found on <https://osuokc.edu/honors>.

Submission of Contract.

Upon receiving instructor approval of the project, the student should complete Part I of the Honors contract form. Students must submit Part I of the contract with all sections completed and signed to the Honors Committee by the end of the fourth week of a 16-week semester. (At their discretion, the committee may review contracts submitted after this deadline.) The contract will be reviewed by the Honors Committee for approval.

Committee Approval of Contract.

The Honors Committee is responsible for reviewing the proposed project, reflecting on the course outcomes and the project alignment with those outcomes, seeking any necessary clarification, and notifying students of approval of Honors contracts. This should generally be completed no later than the sixth week of the semester.

Completing the Contract.

Honors projects, when applicable, are submitted through a Canvas course shell called the “Honors Program.” The student must submit the completed project and Part II of the contract with their instructor’s signature.

The Honors Committee will review the project and determine whether to approve Honors credit; the Committee will notify the student and faculty of their decision. Upon successful completion of an Honors contract, as decided by both the faculty instructor and the Honors Committee, the faculty instructor will enter the Honors credit (H) in the student information system when final grades are entered.. Any student found to have violated the academic integrity policy in an Honors class or project is automatically removed from the Honors Program and Honors credit for the class or contract is revoked. The student must also have earned at least an “A” or “B” in the class to earn the (H) distinction of an Honors credit. Grades lower than a “B” are ineligible to receive Honors credit for that course.

Grades in Courses with Honors Contracts.

The student’s grade in a course in which an Honors contract is undertaken shall not be affected by the Honors contract work. However, a grade of “A” or “B” must be earned in the course before Honors credit will be reflected on the student’s transcript.

Receiving Honors Credit by Contracts.

To earn Honors credit in the course, the student must: (1) complete the project as described in the Honors contract by the fourteenth week of a 16-week semester AND (2) earn a grade of an “A” or “B” in the course. The Honors contract does NOT affect the student’s final grade in the course. (Note: An “incomplete” Honors contract is permitted ONLY in those instances in which the students receive a grade of “I” at the time the

course grade is submitted. The Honors contract then must be completed at or before the time the “I” grade is removed.)

The student must submit the completed project for the instructor’s approval no later than the end of the fourteenth week of a 16-week semester. If the instructor approves of the quality of the project, the instructor should sign Part II of the Honors contract.

By the end of the fifteenth week of the semester, the student must submit their Honors project and Part II of the contract with their instructor’s signature to the Honors Committee for review. The committee will ensure that the project has met the requirements for Honors projects as described in this document. If the committee agrees that the project merits Honors credit, the instructor will be notified no later than the last day of Finals Week with a final copy of the contract, signed by the Honors Committee Chair . The instructor shall post the student’s grade as AH if the student otherwise earned an “A” in the course or BH if the student otherwise earned a “B.”

Instructors shall not apply honors credit without the approval of the Honors Committee.

Reporting and Documentation.

The instructor shall save copies of completed Honors contracts with their final grade sheets, and together they shall be submitted to the Registrar. Copies of all Honors contracts and documentation of students’ Honors work shall be filed in the appropriate School office.

Section 4 – Program Awards

Honors Program Graduate

OSU-OKC graduates with fifteen hours of qualifying Honors credit will be eligible to receive a \$500 cash award*. Up to five awards may be given each academic year. If there are more than five eligible recipients for the award, the Honors Committee will divide the available money among the eligible recipients. The Honors Committee Chair must notify Financial Aid no later than 15 days after commencement for students receiving cash awards. These students are considered Honors Program Scholar Graduates and are recognized at graduation with a cord and medallion, as well as have their names added to the Honors plaque.

Outstanding Honors Contract for Student and Faculty Mentor

The Honors Committee shall select the winner of the Outstanding Honors Contract on an annual basis. Eligible contracts for the award must meet all requirements of the contract, and the course must be completed by the student with a minimum letter grade of B. The winning student will receive a \$250 cash award*, and the student's faculty mentor will also receive a \$250 cash award. No Honors Committee member will be eligible to vote if a student in his/her course is competing.

*Cash awards are disbursed to the student's account and first applied to any balance owed. Any remaining funds are sent to the student according to their refund preferences on file with Business Services.

OSU-OKC Student Leader Scholarship

This is a tuition waiver scholarship for up to 15 credit hours. The Honors Committee will develop rules for vetting student applicants in order to award the scholarship.

Please note: As the scholarship is waiver-based, *the recipient must be eligible to receive a tuition waiver*. Students who are already waiver recipients are not eligible. Communication with Financial Aid is imperative to ensure that the chosen recipient can benefit.

No student may receive more than one award annually.