

HONORS OPTION CONTRACT

What is the Honors Option Contract?

We strongly encourage students to enroll in the Honors classes available. However, sometimes students cannot fit an Honors class into their schedule. This is when the Honors Option Contract can be valuable.

The Honors Option Contract converts one regular 3-unit course at USD into Honors. In order to make the class Honors, the professor assigns additional work for the student to complete.

What does the extra work entail?

Students may complete a significant project or paper at the end, or various short assignments throughout the course (e.g., papers, oral presentations, readings). The extra work should challenge the student to think critically, delve deeper on a topic, and/or examine an issue from an interdisciplinary perspective. Please reference the [“What is an Honors Course” handout](#) for guidance.

What kinds of projects can be completed for a contract?

Appropriate contracts vary by discipline, but here are just a few ideas:

- Conduct an individual research project or assist with faculty research
- Create, test, and/or evaluate a software program
- Prepare and present a class lecture
- Complete a small group project with other Honors students
- Produce a research paper
- Choreograph a dance
- Create an exhibit
- Extend course knowledge to community outreach
- Design and test a lab project

Before approaching faculty, we recommend that students brainstorm a few ideas for the extra work.

Does the contract have to be for a class inside my major?

No, Honors Contracts can be completed in any discipline, no matter your major. However, this can be an excellent opportunity to connect with faculty and network within your department. Often times, contracts can become great starting points for the thesis project.

How do I submit a contract?

You must first ask the professor if she or he is willing to contract. Faculty do not have to do it. We understand it creates extra work for them, and unfortunately, we do not provide stipends. However, many professors are eager to work with Honors students!

Together, you would fill out the electronic form: <https://usd.tfaforms.net/218208>

When you submit the form, the professor receives a copy. They have one week to electronically sign. Next, the Honors Program Director reviews and electronically signs.

When do I see the “H” added to the course?

The “H” gets added to the course at the end of the term, after the final grade is posted.

Can I contract a course when I study abroad?

In addition to using the Honors Contract on campus, students may also use it during a short-term study abroad experience (e.g., Intersession, Summer) *if* the 3-unit course is taught by a USD faculty member.