

**Bryant University**  
**The Honors Program**  
**Honors Course Election Contract Guidelines/Instructions**

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**Purpose and Philosophy of the Honors Contract**

A “contact” course is a process by which a traditional course can be designated as an honors course. While an option for some members in the Program, it should only be utilized where special circumstances prevent the registration of scheduled honors courses.

It is suggested that a contracted course should be considered in two situations which will define a set of course deliverables which will

- a) lead to increased knowledge and experience for a professional career/graduate school or
- b) begin compiling knowledge or research for the senior honors project.

In each of these examples, the member will be focusing their efforts on an "*honors-based*" goal and a specific objective, not just simply fulfilling a program requirement. The contract details should not be just simply writing a term paper which has no purpose; honors courses should accept the notion of "*challenge with a purpose.*" Since the members who choose a contract course are mainstreamed into traditional classes, the benefits of an honors course (other students in the class, co-curricular activities, etc.) are not realized.

Contracting courses are not a method of “crafting” a schedule to avoid a professor, course or an “inconvenient” time of day. Approval of contracted courses is **not** automatic. It is strongly recommended that a preliminary discussion is conducted with the Honors Program Coordinator and assignment professor **prior** to submitting a contract.

**Eligible Faculty:** The contract courses require a faculty sponsor assigned to a traditional course. Only full-time, tenure-track/tenured members of the Bryant University faculty are eligible to sponsor a contract. In consultation with the member, the faculty member must document the additional requirements and deliverables that the honors member must fulfill in order to complete the contracted class.

**Due Date:** Contracts are required to be submitted to the Honors Program Coordinator no later than the end of the third calendar week of the semester in which the contract is being requested. Therefore, please plan accordingly! Check the honors website for specific due date.

Requests for contracting courses will be evaluated on their merits. Contracting should be used only when extreme circumstances or significant rationale require this request. In addition, contracting should not be used to “*craft*” a schedule.

The objective of the Program is to cultivate an environment with honors members “raising the bar” for themselves and creating a more unique environment. Contracting a course eliminates that environment.

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**Grading Criteria**

The member must provide detail grading criteria on all course deliverables; standard and honors-level work. This criterion replaces the course syllabus for the purposes of fulfilling the honors contract. The final grading criterion is determined by the professor. The “honors-level” deliverable work **must** denote at least thirty percent of the final grade calculation. Therefore, the grading criterion must be quantifiable in nature (defined in either point or percentage framework). The syllabus for the course must be attached to the honors contract prior to submission. An example of the grading criterion is as follows:

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Points</b>
Exams (2)	500
Final Exam	300
Quizzes	200
Total	1000

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Points</b>
Exams (2)	500
Term Paper *	300
Class Presentation *	200
Total	1000

The previous example illustrates the “replacement” of the final exam and quizzes with a term paper and class presentation (as signified by the \*). These assignments define the honors-level work to be completed with an approved contract. These honors-level components should be the basis to explain the rationale and assignments in more detail (bottom of page 1 and top of page 2) and fulfills the thirty-percent rule.

**Procedures**

Once a contract is approved, the member cannot “return” the course to a traditional course without the approval of the sponsoring faculty member **and** the Honors Program Coordinator. These discussions will avoid any misunderstanding or scheduling conflicts. The rationale for electing the contract along with the individual member’s situation will be reviewed before approving the contract.

The Honors Contract Form must be utilized to document the additional responsibilities for the traditional course. The form must be approved by the member, professor and Honors Program Coordinator. The signed form will be retained by the Coordinator until the end of the semester.

The form is “editable” and the information can be directly entered onto the form. Just click on an area and type in. Save a copy of the completed form to your personal computer. **Handwritten forms will not be accepted.**

At the completion of the course, the member must receive the approval of the faculty member to signify the successful completion of the contract. The original contract form must be used to gain the professor’s final approval. The completed form must be returned to the Records Office for processing. The last step, the responsibility of the member, must be accomplished in order for the course to be designated properly as an honors course. **Failure to do so will mean that the member’s transcript will not reflect the course as a designated honors course.**