

**Honors 201: 1-3 Credit Project Guidelines**  
**Making almost any course an Honors course...**

An Honors project consists of additional independent work a student chooses to undertake in consultation with an instructor/mentor in any non-Honors HCC course. Students who successfully complete an Honors project will receive one credit of HON 201. Students may pursue an Honors project in three ways:

- **1-credit Honors project that is attached to a non-Honors, non-developmental, and non-independent study course.** Projects vary in form, and may include traditional research papers, creative work, community service learning projects, fieldwork/lab work research projects, and original design/problem-based projects or advanced study projects with permission of faculty mentor. No matter what form it takes, your completed project must be well researched. You will work together with a faculty mentor to create a project that expands upon the work being done in the course. Project topics are limited only by your imagination or ability, the instructor's course guidelines, and a regard for the degree of academic rigor expected by the HCC Honors Program.
- **A 1-3 credit stand-alone Honors project under the supervision of a faculty mentor.** Projects vary in form, and may include traditional research papers, creative work, community service learning projects, fieldwork/lab work research projects, and original project/problem-based projects or advanced research projects with permission of faculty mentor. No matter what form it takes, your completed project must be well researched. Project topics are limited only by your imagination or ability and a regard for the degree of academic rigor expected by the HCC Honors Program. Constructing an Honors project involves submitting a proposal for the approval of the Honors Subcommittee, working closely with a supervising faculty member, and preparing a brief reflective essay to accompany the completed project. Students will receive appropriate (1, 2 or 3) credit(s) when they complete all steps of the project. Prerequisite: GPA of 3.5 and/or permission of instructor; approval of Honors Committee.
- **A 1-credit Honors project that is to be presented at the state Undergraduate Research Conference.** If you choose this Honors 201 option, you will transform work undertaken as part of an HCC course into a 10-minute conference presentation. Approximately two months before the conference, you will submit a written abstract to the conference organizers; then, after presenting your research at the UGRC, you will write a brief reflective/analytical essay (3-5 pages) in

which you discuss the entire process: turning class work into a public presentation, presenting, seeing other presenters, etc. The UGRC accepts creative work, community service learning projects, and problem-based research as well as more traditional research topics. More information on the Undergraduate Research Conference can be found on the conference website:

<https://www.honors.umass.edu/undergraduate-research-conference>

#### *Three Important Notes:*

- A single project may not receive credit for more than one option.
- A student may stop work on an Honors Project at any time with no penalty. Students who choose not to complete a project will not submit the project to the Committee, and will not register for HON 201. In other words: an Honors Project that is not completed will not show up in any way on the student's transcript.
- Honors projects *may not* be attached to 0-level courses, to independent studies, to the Honors Colloquium, to Honors Learning Communities or to ENG 101.

#### **To be eligible for Honors 201, you must**

- Have a GPA of 3.5 or the permission of an instructor
- Earn at least a "B" in the course to which you are attaching HON 201
- Complete the Honors Project Proposal to Honors Sub-committee by early November (for fall semester projects) or late March (for spring semester projects) in order to receive feedback from the committee with enough time to complete your project in the same semester. A project need not be completed in the semester in which it was begun; however, it must be completed before you graduate if you wish to receive credit.

## **HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE HON 201**

### **A Step-by-Step Guide**

- 1) Discuss your interests with your professor/faculty mentor and/or the Honors Program Coordinator (HPC). Make sure your mentor has copies of the documents, "How to Be a Faculty Mentor in the Honors Program" and the "Honors Program Faculty Mentor Form". Your mentor should sign this form and you should submit it to the HPC.
- 2) Meet with your mentor at least once to discuss the proposal you plan to submit.
- 3) After selecting your faculty mentor, you should begin to narrow your project topic and create a research question/hypothesis/thesis. Projects often reflect students' academic interests, so you may wish to choose a project in your target field of study. No matter what form it takes, your completed project must be well researched.
- 4) Submit your honors project proposal to HPC by dropping off in Honors Program office in Frost 270 MWF between 9am-3pm.

- 5) Before beginning work on a project, you *must* consult with an HCC Reference Librarian, who will advise you about research—or, in some cases, certify that the project does not require traditional library resources.
- 6) You will receive feedback on your proposal from the Honors Committee in one of two ways: 1.) We will ask you to meet with HPC and your faculty mentor (usually about 2-3 weeks after you have submitted your proposals); OR 2.) We will send feedback via email.
- 7) When you complete your project, you will write a short reflective essay in which you describe, explain, and evaluate your work—see writing requirements in next section. If you are completing a project under Options B, C, D, or E below, you will also need to write a report that meets the expectations of your discipline. At this time, you will also complete the Honors Project Final Checklist.
- 8) Turn in an electronic copy of your final project and reflective essay as well as a hard copy of the final checklist to HPC for final signature.
- 9) Upon successful completion of an Honors Project with all signatures, go to the Welcome Center (Frost 221) to register for HON 201. You then pay for the one credit, which will transfer as a general elective.
- 10) Be aware that projects completed before final exams week will be reviewed and finalized in the same semester; however, projects finished during or after final exams week will not reviewed until the following semester. Your transcript will list the title of your Honors Project and the grade you received.

## **FIVE TYPES OF HONORS PROJECTS**

*Two notes about writing requirements:*

- Reflective essay: At the end of your project, you will write a 1-2 page reflection that reveals what you learned from your Honors Project experience.
- If you complete a project under Options B, C, D, or E below, you will write a report that is appropriate in length and style to the discipline in which you are working, in consultation with your mentor.

### *Option A: Research projects*

Your project should

- develop and investigate a research question that needs to be explored/answered
- engage in critical analysis of social science, humanities, and/or interdisciplinary work
- result in a paper of at least 10 pages, excluding the abstract and works cited pages
- conform to MLA, APA, or Chicago documentation.

### Option B: *Creative projects*

In the medium of your choice, you will explore a question or problem within that medium. Note: The Music Department has specific requirements—contact Elissa Brill Pashkin for more information. In completing your creative project, you should

- create and present your work on campus and/or in the community
- invest at least as much as would be required for a traditional research project.

### Option C: *Civic Engagement/ Service Learning projects*

This option allows you to work with a community organization to develop and implement a range of projects. Students may

- conduct community-based research that will benefit a community-based organization; for example, you might research the water quality in a nearby brook and then report your findings to interested community partners
- design a specific project in conjunction with a community partner around a course issue/topic/theme; for example, if you were in an environmental design course, you might create a new garden for an organization that promotes sustainability
- develop other civic engagement opportunities in consultation with your faculty advisor; these may including letter-writing campaigns or other action-oriented work around an issue or topic related to the course.

### Option D: *Fieldwork/Lab work*

This option allows you to do either of the following:

- Laboratory or fieldwork research on an existing topic, which will provide you with direct lab or fieldwork research experience
- Anthropological fieldwork-based research using ethnographic methodologies; you will learn and practice qualitative research techniques with real world applications.

### Option E: *Original Design / Problem-Based Project or Advanced Study (STEM)*

This option allows you to do either of the following:

- Original project/problem-based research, which allows STEM students to work on a design problem or on a project that can be built or tested, such as a computer program or an engineering project
- Research that is experimental, theoretical or computational; this type of project would allow you to learn advanced concepts on your own and gain research

experience by trying to answer mathematical/scientific questions and write in a style appropriate for scientific research.

Questions? Contact Dr. Vanessa Martinez, Honors Program Coordinator, FR 270, ext. 2858, [vmartinez@hcc.edu](mailto:vmartinez@hcc.edu) or Sue Streeter, Program Assistant, FR 270, ext. 2427, [ssreeter@hcc.edu](mailto:ssreeter@hcc.edu).