SJC Honors Program Contracts

Step-by-Step

1. Before approaching an instructor to propose an honors contract or project, please read through these steps.

2. When you approach the instructor to request that he or she guide you in an honors contract or project, be sure that you have reviewed the syllabus and attended one week of classes in order to better formulate one or more project ideas. Students who are motivated to formulate their own projects, on a topic about which they have a question, are usually more engaged in the project and are more compelled to complete it. This is your project, not the instructor’s. You must take responsibility and the instructor will guide you through the process.

3. E-mail, call, or visit the instructor to schedule an appointment (usually 30 minutes) to discuss your project. Be professional. Instructors are happy to guide motivated students through a project, but they are busy. Be punctual and respectful.

4. Review the proposal form with the instructor. Ask questions. Be certain that you understand what is expected from you.

5. Set up a regular appointment schedule with your instructor and stick to it.

6. Provide your instructor with the weekly assignments or updates that he or she requests.

7. E-mail, e-mail, e-mail! Check your San Jac e-mail and maintain communication with your instructor.

8. If your instructor requires you to make a presentation to your class or to another audience, plan ahead for any audio-visual equipment you might need. Also, rehearse your presentation.

9. Turn in your project on or before your final class meeting. Do not wait until finals week.
**Contract Instructions and Process**

Students who are first time in college (FTIC) are required to complete the honors success course EDUC/PSYC 1300 before undertaking an honors contract (special permission must be obtained from your campus honors coordinator if you do not meet this criteria). To graduate with an Honors Graduate distinction, students are required to take at least 12 hours of Honors courses. Please see the student handbook or contact your campus Honors Coordinator for more information.

To complete the contract, students work in close collaboration with the professor to establish a project or conduct research that goes *above and beyond* the regular course content. Several times a semester the student and professor should meet to track the progress of the contract, in order to ensure that the student is completing the project to the professor’s satisfaction and at an honors level. Students are encouraged to present their contract project to the class.

The contract project, and the decision to allow a student to complete an Honors contract, is left to the discretion of the professor. The professor may also impose additional requirements that the student must fulfill in order to complete the contract (for example, the student must earn an “A” in the regular course). Once the contract option has been discussed with the professor, the contract form must be completed and turned in to the campus Honors Coordinator.

**Grade Reporting for an Honors Contract**

Once the contract has been satisfactorily completed at the end of the semester, the professor must submit the following information to the campus Honors Coordinator:

- Name of student earning Honors credit by contract
- Name of course
- Copy of project, paper, or other example of student work (if applicable)

**Contract Proposal Deadline:** Completed contract forms must be submitted to the campus honors coordinator by **Wednesday September 19, 2012.**

**Contract Completion Deadline:** All components of the contract must be completed and submitted to the instructor **no later than Wednesday December 5, 2012,** though many instructors will require an earlier due date.

For questions or more information please contact your campus Honors Coordinator:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>North Campus</th>
<th>Central Campus</th>
<th>South Campus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doug Simmons</td>
<td>Ben Fraser</td>
<td>Walter Thompson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>281-998-6150, x 7287</td>
<td>281-476-1501, x 1766</td>
<td>281-922-3649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:douglas.simmons@sjcd.edu">douglas.simmons@sjcd.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:ben.fraser@sjcd.edu">ben.fraser@sjcd.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:walter.thompson@sjcd.edu">walter.thompson@sjcd.edu</a></td>
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Honors Contract Criteria

The goal of an honors contract should be to simulate, as much as possible, the experience of Honors coursework. Projects, research, or other activities should be a collaborative effort between the student and professor, with a scope and depth not covered in regular coursework. Creativity and novel approaches to exploring the subject matter are encouraged. The following may be included as components of an Honors contract:

- Interdisciplinary linkage, allowing students to make broad analytical links between different courses and fields of study
- Writing component, especially short critical essays, responses, and journal entries
- Utilization of local, regional, or national experts in the field
- Development of research and writing skills, resulting in a well-documented research paper or project
- Use of primary and secondary sources as course material, rather than relying solely on the departmental textbook
- Activities, projects, and research that encourages critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation
- Use of presentations and oral work to encourage interaction and promote speaking skills
- Interactive and creative use of media and technology above and beyond basic course content: podcasts, class videos, blogs, wikis, webpage development, etc
- Role playing, application, and implementation of course material, creative approaches to content delivery and experimental projects
Honors Contract Proposal SAMPLE

Student: Jane Q. Public
G#: G00654321
Instructor: James P. Talent
Course title: Introduction to Philosophy
Semester: Spring 2012

Project Title: Kurt Vonnegut’s Cat’s Cradle: A Philosophical Viewpoint

Project description:

The student will examine Kurt Vonnegut’s novel Cat’s Cradle from a philosophical viewpoint. The student will produce an 8-10 page, MLA-style, analytical research essay developing the thesis that the novel is an attack on the Empiricist school of philosophical thought. The student will include/incorporate no fewer than five scholarly articles (peer-reviewed) of the novel. This project will be completed in addition to all other work the in the Intro to Phil course. This project will be interdisciplinary in nature, involving the student’s knowledge of contemporary American literature and philosophy.

In addition to satisfying the normal objectives/competencies of the course, the student must complete the following objectives to accomplish a higher level of scholastic work to be considered “honors.”

1. Submit an 8-10 page, MLA-style, analytical research essay incorporating no fewer than 5 scholarly articles.
2. Prepare and deliver a 10-15 minute presentation of her research to the class and lead a discussion of the topic.
3. Meet with the professor regularly throughout the semester.

* Additional sample proposals may be found at www.sanjac.edu/honors
SJC Honors Program
Contract Proposal Form

Student name: ________________________________________________________________

Student G#: ___________________ Student e-mail: ______________________________

Student phone: _____________________ Campus of Course:  North    South    Central

Instructor name: ______________________________________________________________

Instructor e-mail: _____________________ Instructor phone: ________________

Course title/name: __________________________________________________________

Course number: _____________________ Course CRN: __________________________

Project title: ______________________________________________________________

REQUIRED MATERIALS - Please submit the following items to your campus honors coordinator. Please remove all staples and use a paper clip to secure the documents (do not submit the sample contract and instructions included in this packet—retain or recycle them). Incomplete proposals will not be considered for approval.

☐ On a separate sheet of paper, please provide a typed description (abstract/thesis/hypothesis) of the project (see sample proposal provided in this packet) and its demonstrable or deliverable material (e.g., presentation, research paper, creative performance, experiment, survey, etc.) Please make sure that the student’s name, G#, instructor’s name, course title, and project title on indicated on the top of page.

☐ A copy of the course syllabus

☐ This two-page form completed and signed
Student:  I understand that my project will be evaluated for thoroughness, clarity, sound research, critical/creative thinking, evidence of effort, and other criteria. I also understand the completing the honors contractual assignment does not automatically guarantee earning honors credit for the course.

Student signature: ______________________________ Date: _____________________

Instructor:  I have read this honors contract proposal and agree to the terms described therein.

Instructor signature: ______________________________ Date: _____________________

For Office Use:

Campus Honors Contract Committee recommendation:

Approved  Approved with revision(s)  Denied

Campus Coordinator signature: ______________________________ Date: _______________

Dean, Honors Program, signature: ______________________________ Date: _______

Contract completed:  Yes  No