



Honors Program

Faculty Guidelines for Supervising Honors Projects

Students in Keystone's Honors Program are required to do an Honors project in one of their courses during most of their semesters at Keystone (3 courses for associate's degree students, 6 for bachelor's degree students). There are many ways an honors component could be added to a course. Research into programs at other schools indicates that something like just adding a paper, for example, is often not the best choice. There is a saying among honors directors: ***"Just more is not better; better is better."***

A key purpose for all projects is to enrich the academic experience for our best students and to provide opportunities for them to work closely with faculty mentors. All honors projects should be academically rigorous, but not so difficult that they overwhelm students. Generally, projects should allow students to take a "deeper dive" into a topic presented or touched on in a course. Projects must exceed the normal expectations for the course, and the instructor must be clear in the proposal exactly how the project goes above the regular course requirements.

With that in mind, here is a list of possible honors components, although faculty should not feel limited to just these suggestions.

1. An expanded paper assignment with emphasis on a higher level of analysis, not necessarily length (i.e., using more primary sources or advanced readings)
2. Advanced or additional problem sets or proofs
3. An additional research project
4. An extra research paper, or a paper in a course that does not require a paper
5. A class presentation or lecture (if not already required)
6. Additional readings (perhaps textbook chapters not usually assigned or more advanced articles) with summaries and reviews, or with advanced discussions with the faculty mentor.
7. Field research (e.g. architecture in Scranton, corporate comparisons/contrasts, wildlife on the back campus, water quality, invasive species, data analysis, etc.)
8. Completion of additional artwork
9. Combining the content of a course with a project from another discipline (an art project tied to a history course, for example)

The honors component could also involve the following:

1. A defense of a paper/project before a faculty panel

2. Presentation of a paper or research project on campus or at a conference that facilitates student presentations

When the project involves writing, approximately 8-10 pages are required, whether it be one or more papers or an extension of a paper already required for a course. The Honors Council proposes that a rough estimate of the scope of the project might be put in terms of being the equivalent of a one-credit course. Projects with presentations usually involve the student completing a proper subordinate outline for a presentation of approximately 20 minutes in length before a class or audience. If appropriate, honors projects could be presented in poster format or verbally at a conference, or at the Undergraduate Research Celebration in the spring at Keystone.

All Keystone courses are eligible to be taken for Honors Designation by students in the Honors Program, with the permission of the instructor, except the following: FYS 1110, COMM 1125, PHED 1110, IT 1115, MATH 1115, MATH 1125, SCI 0050, ACCT 1125, ACCT 1155, ACCT 1160, IT 4710 through 4730, all 1000-level ART studio courses, all Internship, Field Experience, Student Teaching, and Experiential Learning courses.

When honors students wish to take a course for honors designation, they should request permission from and consult with a possible mentor in one of their current courses about 4 weeks into the semester. The faculty member, together with the student, should fill out the Honors Contract and submit it to the Honors Program Director by the due date specified by the program director. At that point it will be submitted for approval by the Honors Council, which will be responsible for making sure that it is roughly equal in scope with other honors contracts. Adjunct faculty are also eligible to mentor honors projects.

Faculty will be paid a stipend of \$100 for one student in a class that is taking it for honors. At the end of the semester, the faculty mentor will report the project grade and the final course grade for each mentee to the program director. Students must have a minimum grade of "B" in both the course and the Honors component of the course for Honors designation on the transcript.

Any faculty member who has questions about mentoring or proposals please feel free to reach out to me via email.

Sincerely,

Ward Roe, MFA, Professor

Honors Program Director