



Columbia College Honors Program  
1301 Columbia College Drive  
Columbia, SC 29203 USA

## The Honors Choice

Although honors education means much more than simply completing additional or more difficult work, the experienced honors teacher and the exceptionally motivated student may contractually agree to supplement an existing catalogue course in creative and substantive ways that allow the student to count the course as honors. The **Honors Choice** compromises the community of an honors course, but it permits both students and faculty to pursue the creativity, uniqueness, independence, and academically enhanced standards of honors in a special setting.

### **GUIDELINES:**

- ❖ Students are limited to *one Honors Choice* course selection of no more than four credit hours out of the twenty-four hours needed to complete the program.
- ❖ Students must initiate the petition in writing by consulting with the advisor and faculty member. Students must collaborate with the faculty member to propose a course of study, identify appropriate outcomes or experiences, and specify criteria for evaluation. A form is provided to help students and instructors formalize the **Honors Choice**.
- ❖ The petition for **Honors Choice** should be submitted at the time of pre-registration, with final proposal due prior to the end of the semester before the term in which the **Honors Choice** will be taken.
- ❖ The faculty member must be an experienced honors teacher.
- ❖ The advisor, instructor, and director of honors must approve the **Honors Choice**.
- ❖ Upon completion of the student's **Honors Choice**, the faculty member will notify the director in writing that the student has successfully met the particular challenges of honors in the course and that the student's record may reflect honors credit for the course.

An **Honors Choice** contract is used to allow an honors student to receive honors credit for a non-honors course. It generally involves replacing a learning activity in the non-honors course with one that represents the challenge of the Honors Program but can also involve additional work of an independent nature.

The **Honors Choice** contract is written by the student and the faculty member together. It should provide answers to questions such as the following:

- ❖ How does the honors part of the course extend or deepen the honors student's learning experience in the non-honors course?
- ❖ What outcomes are expected in the course? How will the outcomes enrich the student's honors learning?
- ❖ How will the honors work be assessed?

The student and the faculty member should collaboratively complete and sign the **Honors Choice** contract form. On the form, the student and faculty member should agree on the issues described in the questions listed above.

This three-part scheme is meant to be a set of guidelines, not a rigid formula, so anyone writing an **Honors Choice** contract should feel free to adjust them as appropriate.

The main purpose to keep in mind when crafting an **Honors Choice** contract is to enrich a student's learning in a standard course by challenging her not necessarily with just more work, but with deeper, more qualitatively substantive approaches to course content and assignments.