HONORS PROJECT CONTRACTS
Policies & Guidelines

Honors credit may be earned in any regular credit class at The College through a process called "honorization." In a nutshell, the student and instructor enter into a contract that details the work that will be done in the class. When the terms of the contract are fulfilled, the Honors credit is earned.

The work designated as Honors must be *over and above* what is done in the regular course. Honors work should build upon techniques and methodologies taught in the course; however, the material and research should go beyond normal course instruction. For example, a student in "English Literature After 1800" might write a paper about a Yeats poem not covered in class. Or, a student in "Earth Science" might write a paper on the *El Niño* effect.

The following information should be used as a reference for faculty and administrators involved in the honorization process. If any questions arise, please contact the Honors Manager by emailing honors@palmbeachstate.edu or calling 561-868-3892.

The Honors Project Process

The process of honorization may seem daunting and convoluted at first, but it is pretty straightforward. Step-by-step, the process is:

1. The student who wishes to do Honors work approaches the instructor and asks if the instructor would be willing to oversee an Honors Project.
2. If the instructor agrees, the student and faculty member work together to define what the topic of the Honors Project will be and what model it will follow (see next section).
3. Once the details are agreed upon, the student and instructor complete an Honors contract with contact information, course information, and project information, including a tentative title, the model type, a description of the project, and an instructor's statement that explains how the Honors Project exceeds the normal expectations of the course. The Honors Project Contract can be found online at http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/honors/Documents/HonorsContract-PayGradeForm-120412.pdf
4. In the section titled "Signatures of Contract Agreement," the student and instructor sign the contract.
5. At this point, the contract should be forwarded to the Associate Dean. Either the instructor or the student may take the contract to the Associate Dean, whichever works best for those involved. The Associate Dean will sign the contract and forward it to the Honors office (MS #51).
6. When the contract reaches the Honors office, it will be reviewed to verify that the student is eligible to do Honors work. If the contract is approved, the Honors manager will sign the contract and return the original, along with a packet of information for completing the contract, to the instructor.
7. As the term progresses, the student and instructor should meet regularly to discuss research and other matters relating to the project. At a minimum, *three meetings* should be scheduled to guarantee adequate oversight.
8. As the project nears completion, a mandatory in-class presentation of the Honors work should be scheduled.
9. Completed projects should be reviewed closely by the instructor for quality, grammar, and correct citation.
10. Once approved, the instructor signs the contract under "Signatures of Project Approval."
11. The signed contract and the completed project are submitted to the Associate Dean who will sign and verify that the terms of the contract are fulfilled.
12. The contract and project will then be submitted to the Honors office for review and processing.
13. The contract is deemed fulfilled; Honors credit is granted; and an Honors notation is added to the course on the student's transcript.

Honors Project Models

General Guidelines for All Models: All projects, regardless of model, must:
1. Be 2,000 to 5,000 words,
2. Include a cover page,
3. Include a 'Works Cited' or 'References' page with documentation and citation in the body of the paper of all references listed (the number of references is dependent upon which model is followed),
4. Use either Modern Language Association (MLA) or American Psychology Association (APA) style format (instructor's choice),
5. Be error-free and presented in 12-point font.

Models: (described below)
1. Traditional Research Paper
2. Data Collection
3. Interview
4. Web Page
5. Teaching
6. Product Creation
7. Rhetorical Analysis
8. Service Learning

Traditional Research Paper
1. **Description:** This model consists of a traditional type research paper based on original and previously published research related to the topic.   The paper must be thesis-based rather than a survey of a subject.
2. **Suggestions:** The student should meet with the instructor to determine a discipline-specific topic.
3. **Resources:** The student should use primary sources whenever possible. Sources may include academic journals, books, articles (from major publications and newspapers), expert documentation (interviews), and appropriate Internet sites.
4. **Documentation:** This model must be correctly formatted and documented using the APA or MLA style. The style will be indicated by the directing professor.
5. **Guidelines:** The project must be 2,000 to 5,000 words with *ten* (10) sources cited and included in a 'Works Cited' or 'References' page. The ten sources do not include encyclopedias or dictionaries, although these sources may be used in addition to the ten. The paper must be well written with proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The student will present the project orally to the class. It will be the responsibility of the student and the directing professor to assure that these guidelines have been met before the paper is submitted to the Honors office.

Data Collection Model
1. **Description:** This model will allow students to develop research based on data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Traditional scientific methodology should guide the process:
   a. Define a question; speculate on causal connections;
   b. Conduct a literature review (at least 5 sources);
   c. Form a hypothesis;
   d. Decide on data collection variables and methods;
   e. Collect data;
   f. Organize and analyze results;
   g. Interpret data and draw conclusions;
   h. Present data and conclusions.
2. **Suggestions:** Projects must include data collection, but the method for collection may vary.

3. **Resources:** The primary resources will be the student's original collected data. The additional resources will include a minimum of *five* (5) scholarly published sources. These sources may be academic journals, books, major newsmagazines, or newspapers.

4. **Documentation:** This model must be correctly formatted and documented using the APA or MLA style. The style will be indicated by the directing professor.

5. **Guidelines:** This model requires a paper of 2,000 to 5,000 words with collected data and a minimum of *five* (5) outside sources properly documented within the paper and on the 'Works Cited' or 'References' page(s). The paper must be well written with proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The student will present the project orally to the class. It will be the responsibility of the student and the directing professor to assure that these guidelines have been met before the paper is submitted to the Honors office.

6. **Additional Guideline for this Model: Additional Guidelines for this Model:** Because PBCC does not have an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee or an Institutional Review Board, certain types of research are restricted. All animal studies, including observation projects, are prohibited. Students wishing to collect survey data for analysis in an honors project must submit a "Survey Approval Form" for review (http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/honors/Documents/surveyapprovalform.pdf). Projects based on survey data collected without prior approval will be rejected. Other forms of human subjects data collection – even those generally regarded as exempt by the Federal Policy on the Protection of Human Subjects (i.e., cognitive evaluation, taste testing, etc.) – are not permitted. For more details on restricted research, advising faculty should consult Section M of the Academic Management Manual (http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/academicservices/information-and-reference/academic-management-manual/default.aspx).

Interview Model

1. **Description:** This model allows students to conduct an interview(s) as part of an Honors project. Students taking the Leadership Development (SLS2261) course may use this model to study leaders from the campus or community by spending time observing and interviewing the leader and then reporting the results of those efforts in a final written paper.

2. **Suggestions:** Students can interview those considered an expert in a specific area and incorporate the interview into a written paper. A student taking the Leadership course will "Shadow a Leader." The student will pick a leader in her / his field of interest and obtain written permission to work with the leader. The student will spend at least five hours observing the leader during his / her working day, taking notes on what took place and how the leader handled the various challenges he / she faced. The student will also interview the leader, asking questions about the leader's philosophy of leadership and how the philosophy was applied to what the student had observed.

3. **Resources:** The main resource will be the interview itself and may include the student's observation of the person interviewed. Students should use primary sources whenever possible. Other sources may include academic journals, books, articles (from major publications and newspapers), and appropriate Internet sites. Student taking the Leadership course will use materials taken from the Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Development textbook as well as numerous other books on the subject.

4. **Documentation:** The student will maintain notes of his / her interview and observations. This model must be correctly formatted and documented using the APA or MLA style. The style will be indicated by the directing professor.

5. **Guidelines:** The subject of the interview must be considered an "expert" in the field of which he/she is speaking. For those taking the Leadership course, the time spent observing the leader must be sufficient for the student to gain a clear sense of how the leader functions in varying settings. The interview must be thorough enough to provide the student with a strong sense of the leader's philosophy of leadership and his / her perspectives on several aspects of being a leader. The final paper should reflect the contents of both the observation and the interview and how the experience of shadowing the leader related to course materials. The written paper must be 2,000 to 5,000 words with *five* (5) sources cited and included in 'Works Cited' or 'References' page. The five sources do not include encyclopedias or dictionaries, although these sources may be used in addition to the five. The paper must be well written with proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In addition, the interview subject must sign an "Interview Consent Form" (available at

http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/honors/Documents/interviewconsent.pdf) which should be submitted with the final project. The student will present the project orally to the class. It will be the responsibility of the student and the directing professor to assure that these guidelines have been met before the paper is submitted to the Honors office.

Web Page Model

1. **Description:** Students with outstanding skills in any field can do an Honors project that allows them to develop an online web page in their area. This web page will serve as a resource to present and future students and should be accessible as a link off the instructor's homepage.
2. **Suggestions:** Students will create a web page that may be in any discipline and in any visual format, providing the following technical features are present: navigation buttons / links, a hyper-linked bibliography with a minimum of ten sources (URL's and print sources), color schemes that may be viewed by everyone, and (if in a language other than English) there must be a link to a translation of the project. The student and instructor will determine how many linked pages will be needed as well as the appropriate balance between images and text.
3. **Resources:** The instructor in consultation with the student will determine resources.
4. **Documentation:** The instructor may upload the site to his / her PBCC web page or the student may load the page onto an independent server. In the case of the latter, the student will submit the correct URL along with a brief, one-page statement describing what the student learned from constructing the web page. In addition, the student will provide the instructor with an electronic copy of the entire web site.
5. **Guidelines:** The instructor and student will develop a project that allows more depth of experience than is possible with the regular course work. The completed web site must be 2,000 to 5,000 words with *ten* (10) sources cited and included in 'Works Cited' or 'References' page. The ten sources do not include encyclopedias or dictionaries, although these sources may be used in addition to the ten. The site must be well written with proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The student will present the project orally to the class. It will be the responsibility of the student and the directing professor to assure that these guidelines have been met before the project is submitted to the Honors office.
6. **Additional Guidelines for this Model:**
   a. In lieu of a cover page, the student will put on the front page of the web site: "This web site created by [STUDENT NAME] in partial fulfillment of honors credit in [INSTRUCTOR NAME]'s [COURSE TITLE AND NUMBER] class at Palm Beach State College. Page created [DATE OF PUBLICATION]."
   b. The student will also put on the front page of the web site an e-mail address so that he / she may be contacted for more information. Students are encouraged not to use their main e-mail address but to create a secondary address through a free e-mail server such as Yahoo or Hotmail.
   c. The student will also include on the front page a link to The College's main web site: http://www.palmbeachstate.edu. Preferably, this link will be embedded in the 'cover message' on the site's front page (see above, point "a").
   d. The student may not use any Palm Beach State images on the page. For clarification on The College's image guidelines, the student should be referred to http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/facultystaffresources/copyright-guidelines.aspx. Further, the student should pay careful attention not to use any copyrighted material on the web page (see copyright policy below).
   e. Finally, all online sources cited in the text and listed in the 'Works Cited' should have an active hyperlink to the source web page.

Teaching Model

1. **Description:** This model is suitable for students pursuing a career in teaching. In this model, the student should be responsible for teaching a "mini-unit" to the class rather than making a short presentation. The teaching element of this model should be substantive and well-researched and may be highly collaborative between faculty and student. This model represents perhaps the most closely mentored of all the honors models.

2. **Suggestions:** Faculty and student should work closely to define an area that will both (1) go beyond regular course instruction and (2) be of demonstrative value to other students in the class. A variety of teaching tools (i.e., lecture, discussion, visual aid, etc.) should be employed.
3. **Resources:** The instructor, in consultation with the student, will determine resources. Choice of resources will depend greatly on the discipline.
4. **Documentation:** The project must include a minimum of *ten* (10) sources listed in a 'References' page. The ten sources cannot include encyclopedias or dictionaries, although these may be used in addition to the ten. References should be properly cited either in MLA or APA style (professor's choice).
5. **Guidelines:** A video-tape record of the teaching session(s) should be made and a copy submitted to the Honors office. If needed, arrangements should be made with Media Services on the appropriate campus well in advance of the session. Along with the recorded session, lecture / presentation notes should be turned in to the Honors office; these notes should be at least 2000 words. The 'References' page should be appended.

Product Creation Model
1. **Description:** This model allows students to create a product as part of the Honors project and then to describe the product and process in a final written paper.
2. **Suggestions:** Model suggestions include the creation of products such as original art, literature, music, computer programming, or other original works in other fields of study.
3. **Resources:** The main resource would be the student's creative talents and abilities as well as published materials related to the product and the course materials.
4. **Documentation:** Students will be expected to maintain a personal account of the creative process, skills, and resources that were used in the creative procedure as well as sources of inspiration in the development of the product. These would include but not be limited to the personal, social, cultural, historic, and artistic. Students will be expected to document on a timeline log the process from concept to completion with pertinent research that affected the outcome. An introduction with the rationale for the product and an explanation of the significance of the product must also be included. The written paper for this model must be correctly formatted and documented using the APA or MLA style. The style will be indicated by the directing professor.
5. **Guidelines:** The instructor should work closely with the student to help with and to monitor the creative process and its progress. Students should maintain a record of what they did and how their work goes above and beyond the regular course requirements. If possible, students should submit a duplicate of the original product to Academic Services for the Honors permanent record. The original product will be the property of the student. In some cases, the original product may be used to promote Honors activities. In the case of original, unduplicable work, the student should submit pictures (preferably digital) of the piece(s). The accompanying written paper must be 2,000 to 5,000 words with five (5) scholarly sources cited and included in 'Works Cited' or 'References' page. The five sources do not include encyclopedias or dictionaries, although these sources may be used in addition to the five. The paper must be well written with proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The student will present the project orally to the class. It will be the responsibility of the student and the directing professor to assure that these guidelines have been met before the paper is submitted to the Honors office.

Rhetorical Analysis Model
1. **Description:** This model will require the presentation in writing and orally before the class of a scholarly analysis of a literary work or other work relative to the class. Any rhetorical pattern may be used. The major part of the project will be the student's analysis based not only on researched information, but also and especially on the student's development of clear, rational, and convincing support for an explicitly-stated thesis.
2. **Suggestions:** Sources should include published rhetorical analyses in literary and other scholarly journals relating to the subject area in which the project is to be done.

3. **Resources:** Resources would consist of the literary work itself, the student's own analytical powers and the minimum *five* (5) outside sources. These sources may include any authoritative literary works, interviews, letters, and other acceptable sources of information.
4. **Documentation:** This model must be correctly formatted and documented using the MLA or APA style of documentation. The style of documentation will be indicated by the directing professor.
5. **Guidelines:** This model would require a paper of 2,000 - 5,000 words with a minimum of *five* (5) outside sources properly documented within the paper and on the 'Works Cited' or 'References' page(s). A good manual or handbook may provide a guide for proper use of documentation. Further, the paper must be correctly written, with proper grammar, spelling and punctuation. It will be the responsibility of the directing professor to assure that these guidelines have been met before the paper is submitted to the Honors Coordinator.

Service Learning Model
1. **Description:** This model is suitable for students in any course. In this model, the student is responsible for providing service to an agency or organization which is working to alleviate the problems associated with a substantive community concern/social issue. The student is responsible for researching the basis for the problem and/or the effectiveness of the solution(s). In addition, the student should reflect on the value this project had to his/her social and academic development. The service and research components of this model should be substantive and well-researched and may be highly collaborative between faculty and student.
2. **Sequence for Service-Learning Activity:**
    a. Identify Service Site(s)
    b. Communicate with Agency to set up expectations and a plan for service
        http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/servicelearning/documents/Community_Partner_Handbook.pdf
    c. Document Service (minimum of 15 hours)
        http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/servicelearning/documents/student-log-sheet.pdf
    d. Evaluate Learning and Service Site(s)
        http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/servicelearning/documents/student-site-evaluation.pdf
3. **Resources:** For an introduction to Service-Learning at Palm Beach State College, visit http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/servicelearning/. Additional ideas for combining service learning with various academic courses can be found at http://www.servicelearning.org/library/resource/2754.
4. **Documentation:** The project must include a minimum of five (5) scholarly published sources. These sources may be academic journals, books, major newsmagazines, or newspapers. The five sources cannot be encyclopedias or dictionaries, although these may be used in addition to the five. References should be properly cited either in MLA or APA style (professor's choice). The sources may either be incorporated into the reflective journal or appended to the journal in an annotated bibliography.
5. **Guidelines:** This model requires a 2,000 to 5,000 word reflective journal that includes answers to ten (10) specific questions. Five of the questions should be:
    a. What happened? What did you see and hear?
    b. What did you feel? Did your feelings change by the end of the project?
    c. What did you learn? What did you learn that you could not have learned in the classroom?
    d. So what? What difference did your involvement make?
    e. Now what? What happens next?
    The remaining 5 questions should be given by the directing professor and relate to the student's research. The paper must be well written with proper grammar, spelling and punctuation. The student will present the project orally to the class. It will be the responsibility of the student and the directing professor to assure that these guidelines have been met before the paper is submitted to the Honors College office.

Honors Projects Policies

Ex-Post Facto Contracts / Late Projects: Students may not begin the honorization process for a course after completion of the term. Deadlines for project submission are established at the beginning of each term. These deadlines should be adhered to as closely as possible. Under no circumstance will projects be accepted more than *two weeks* after the end of the term. Term dates are published online at
http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/honors/honors-calendar.aspx

Human Subjects Study: Because PBCC does not have an Institutional Review Board, faculty should be extremely careful in mentoring projects that have impact on human subjects.

>   **Interviews:** Interviews are permitted, but students are responsible for obtaining an "Interview Consent" release from the subject(s). If children are interviewed, a parent or legal guardian must sign the release. Release forms should be submitted with the final project.

>   • http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/honors/Documents/interviewconsent.pdf

>   **Surveys:** Students wishing to collect survey data for analysis in an honors project must submit a "Survey Approval Form" for review (available at the link below). Projects based on survey data collected without prior approval will be rejected.

>   • http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/honors/Documents/surveyapprovalform.pdf

>   **Other:** Observation of public behavior is allowed, so long as the observer is not participating in the activities being observed. Other forms of human subjects study – even those generally regarded as exempt by the Federal Policy on the Protection of Human Subjects (i.e., cognitive evaluation, taste testing, etc.) – are expressly prohibited.

Other Restricted Research: Honors projects involving any of the following are prohibited:
  • live vertebrate animals, including observation projects,
  • recombinant DNA,
  • controlled substances,
  • hazardous substances and devices,
  • human and nonhuman animal tissues, or
  • pathogenic agents.

Use of Copyrighted and Other Restricted Material: The use of copyrighted material must not exceed "fair use" standards established by the Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. § 107-118. All copyrighted material, including direct quotes, photographs, lyrics, etc., must be properly cited. In addition, written permission from subjects must be obtained to publish photographs. For further reference, please consult www.copyright.gov/title17/92chap1.html#107.

Faculty Payment: Each instructor who oversees an Honors Project Contract to completion will earn a $100 payment per contract, as stipulated in the PBCC Salary Schedule.

Faculty Contract Limits Per Term: To ensure adequate mentoring, faculty are limited to overseeing ten Honors Project Contracts per term.

Faculty Responsibility in Honors Project Contracts

The instructor is the most important link in the project chain. In the end, it is the faculty member who will determine if the submitted work is worthy of Honors credit. As far as specifics go, faculty responsibility in the Honors Project Contract process is multi-faceted.

Syllabus: An instructor who is willing to do Honors work with students is encouraged (but is not required) to put a note on his / her syllabus indicating this. The note might also refer the student to the Honors web page http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/honors/ for more information.

Rejecting Project Requests: The Honors Project process is collaborative and time-intensive. There are many valid reasons why an instructor may decide to deny a student's request to do Honors work. Honors students are encouraged to be polite in entreaty and to accept "no" gracefully.

The Integrity of the Honors Project Process: Faculty are the guardians of the Honors Project process. From conception to completion, Honors research should be original and closely supervised. Where recycling of prior work is suspected, instructors are urged to either cancel the project or take appropriate corrective measures.

"Grading" Honors Projects: Technically, the Honors Project does not receive a grade. In terms of meriting Honors credit, the project should be thought of as earning either a pass or a fail; that is to say, either the project is worthy of Honors credit or it is not. When an instructor signs an Honors contract indicating successful completion of the project, he / she affirms the following: "I certify that the above named student has satisfactorily completed the Honors Contract in this course according to the standards of Honors." The grade request on the contract form is for the final course grade. If this is not known at the time of project submission, please leave that blank.

If the faculty member deems that the submitted work is not Honors level, then the contract should be regarded as not fulfilled and, therefore, not signed. The unsigned contract and the project should be submitted to Academic Services (MS #51) for filing. Pay / grade forms cannot be processed for unapproved projects unless the project is received in Academic Services.

Uncompleted Honors Projects Contracts: About twenty to twenty-five percent of all signed Honors Projects Contracts are never completed. Understandably, there are various and predictable causes for this. Instructors who know that an Honors Project Contract will, for whatever reason, not be finished should contact the Honors College manager so that a note can be put in the database. Beyond this, instructors are urged not to hold the non-completion of an Honors Project Contract against a student in the calculation of the course grade. Honors work is superadded to regular course requirements. Thus, failure to complete Honors work should not be construed negatively.

Pay / Grade Form: In order to process the $100 payment per contract, an instructor must submit the Pay / Grade form by the end of the term. This form will be sent to the instructor in the packet of information with the original contract. It can also be found online at http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/honors/Documents/HonorsContract-PayGradeForm-120412.pdf

Projects forwarded to the Honors College that are either too short (less than 2000 words), that do not have the minimum number of secondary sources, that lack proper documentation, or that fail to meet other published guidelines will be regarded as inadequately supervised. For this reason, pay/grade forms will not be processed for these projects.

The Associate Dean's Responsibility in Honors Project Contracts

Because a payment is processed along with the project, the Associate Dean plays a key role in the Honors Project Contract process. During the contract approval process, the Associate Dean should review the contract from the instructional vantage. Will adequate oversight be offered to the student? Any doubts should be addressed and resolved at this point; if these concerns cannot be allayed, the contract should not be approved.

During the project approval process, the Associate Dean should review the project again from the instructional vantage, i.e., was adequate oversight offered by the instructor to the student? The Associate Dean may also review the project to verify it meets the contractual requirements of length, model conformity, citation format, etc. This review is not intended to be qualitative as to the content of the project. In all cases, great sensitivity should be exercised during the final approval stage, for the student has already completed the work. Revision, therefore, is preferred to rejection.

The Honors Manager's Review in the Honors Project Process

The Honors manager will review submitted projects to verify that they are of the required length, that they follow the chosen model guidelines, and that citations are formatted correctly. Projects that fail to meet Honors standards are returned for revision. The Honors manager will also read all projects with an eye towards possible inclusion on the Honors web page, for consideration in the Portz Scholars competition, and for other various types of exemplary recognition.