An honors contract is designed by incorporating honors elements into a regular, non-honors course or activity so that Honors students can earn honors credit. For courses, the honors contract is an individually planned modification of the course’s syllabus, usually including modifications of both the learning objectives and assignments. The specific design of an honors contract is created by the student and the instructor; the Director of the University Honors Program can be used to facilitate this process. In the case of non-course activities (e.g., study abroad), a similar process must be followed in terms of completing the contract. The student, instructor, and college Honors representative must agree to the honors contract contents before the option is approved by the University Honors Program to meet the student’s honors requirements. Under no circumstances can an Honors contract be generated after the course or activity.

For regular classes, the honors contract should adhere to the goals described for all honors courses, as much as possible. In particular, the ideal honors contract should delve more deeply into methodology, structure, and/or theory; address more sophisticated questions; and satisfy more rigorous standards than is generally expected by the non-honors syllabus. The modifications to the course should fit within the content and intent of the course’s published description, so specific changes in the learning objectives for the course or activity should be explicitly articulated to demonstrate that they fit.

Whenever possible, the honors assignments should be done as an alternative to some or all of the regular course assignments. Simply increasing the volume of work required or the hours spent on it does not constitute an honors activity. The character and quality of the assignment should be augmented. The time required for honors assignments should remain commensurate with a comparable honors course having the same number of credits.

An optimal honors contract experience will include planned regular meetings throughout the semester between the faculty member and the student to review, discuss, and revise, as needed, the honors components of the course. Because honors contract elements may be experimental, changes in the design will occasionally be necessary. Whenever possible, flexibility and contingencies should be incorporated into the design. In addition, specific deadlines should be identified for staged completion of the honors elements. The student’s grade for an honors contract course should reflect all the student’s work in the course, including work done in common with other students, as well as honors work done.

An individualized honors contract generally limits the Honors student’s contact with other Honors students, so the interaction between the student and instructor becomes increasingly important.
Generally, an Honors student must assume the responsibility for developing and completing the contract. A student planning an honors contract should consult with the faculty member prior to the start of the course or activity and provide that individual with appropriate information. If the contract is for a non-course alternative, the student may consult with their advisor, the college coordinator, or the Director of the University Honors Program for input. The individuals listed can stipulate clarifications, modifications, or alternatives to a student’s proposal and, if necessary, reject contracts that reflect limited or no serious preliminary thought.

**Honors students should be counseled to incorporate honors contracts sparingly into their academic plans.** A student proposing an honors contract for a course or activity should have legitimate and understandable reasons for proposing this action. At no time should an honors contract be used to avoid a regular honors course.

Inspiration, innovation, and integration are welcomed elements of an honors contract proposal. Participation in honors contract course work or activity should result in a mutually engaging and rewarding experience for everyone involved.

*Text adapted from Schreyer Honors College Document, Pennsylvania State University, approved by the Honors Faculty at PSU in October, 2004*
Kansas State University Honors Program
Contract for Applying Hours to Honors Program

Name: ____________________________
Major: ____________________________ WID ____________________________
Course prefix and number (if any) ____________________________ Semester ____________
Credit hours or equivalents requested to be applied to Honors Program ______

Fill in the following information - the box will expand to accommodate your information

Description of activity (use back of page if necessary):

Describe the goal(s) that you have for this activity:

How do you plan to achieve the goal(s)?

Describe how you will document the achievement of your goal(s)

How will this proposed class/activity be different from that which non-honors students are doing?

Indicate those University Learning Outcomes that will be addressed by this course/activity:

_____ Knowledge  _____ Critical Thinking  _____ Communication

_____ Diversity  _____ Integrity

Student signature ____________________________________________ Date ____________

Instructor signature ________________ Printed ____________________________ Date ____________

College Representative signature ________________ Printed ____________________________ Date ____________

Director, University Honors Program ____________________________________________ Date ____________