

## Guidelines for Honors Compacts at Florida Atlantic University

**Purposes:** To provide a mechanism for students to receive honors credit in a course for which enrollment in a designated honors section is not possible.

**Definition:** An **honors compact** is an agreement between a student and an instructor that, under the instructor's guidance, the student will complete an enhancement of a course that significantly enriches his or her educational experience in a manner consistent with other courses that receive honors credit at Florida Atlantic University.

An honors compact **is**:

- an agreement between an undergraduate student and a professor that they will work together collaboratively in order to ensure that the student has a significantly enriched honors experience in a non-honors section of a course.
- intended primarily to serve as part of an approved upper division honors program.
- a method by which a student's educational experience in a course is enhanced through substantive work that reflects one of the following honors themes:
  - Interdisciplinarity and connections among academic fields
  - Research and access to direct sources of knowledge
  - Leadership
  - Service learning
  - Creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship
  - Civic engagement
  - Collaboration
  - The unique setting of southeastern Florida
  - Other topics appropriate to the individual discipline
- an approach to receiving honors credit to which the student, instructor, and administrator in charge of the relevant honors program must all agree.
- only available to students having a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher, as well as a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher in the major itself.
- an achievement that is noted on the student's transcript.

An honors compact **is not**:

- an agreement that can be fulfilled simply by completing an additional paper or a few extra assignments.
- a device that merely makes the material of a course harder or more challenging without providing the type of enhancement typically found in other honors courses at Florida Atlantic University.
- ordinarily an alternative method of receiving honors credit for a course where an honors section is already available to the student. (The department or academic program offering the honors course may waive this restriction if it chooses.)

An honors compact **must**:

- promote academic excellence.
- challenge students to strive toward achieving a significantly higher level of learning than would be possible if this compact were not completed.
- recognize and foster the exceptional abilities and talents of high ability students.
- extend and enrich the cultural or academic perspectives of students
- clearly demonstrate how the honors component
  1. complements and extends the existing content of the course.
  2. is significantly richer than the established requirements of the course both in content and methodology.
- require the student to engage in a high level of critical or thinking, such as analysis, synthesis, innovation, or application.
- culminate in a specific “product” that can be evaluated.

### Procedure

1. As soon as possible, the student will submit to the chair of the department (or the director of the honors program to which the course will be applied) a completed “Application to Pursue an Honors Compact” (see below), which both the student and the instructor of the course have signed. The absolutely last date for the student to submit this form will be the official “Last day to drop/add courses without consequences.”
2. The department chair (or the director of the honors program to which the course will be applied) will review the application as soon as possible and will notify the student and the instructor whether the honors compact has been approved or must be revised.
3. As soon as an honors compact is approved, the department chair or honors program director will notify the University Honors Council that an honors compact is pending. This notification should be submitted to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies who will notify the Registrar of all pending honors compacts.
4. Each honors compact must be initiated by the student and completed with all required signatures no later than the **last official day of final examinations** for any term.
5. The instructor will then notify the department chair or honors program director whether or not an honors compact has been successfully completed no later than the **last official day of final examinations** for any term.
6. The department chair or honors program director will then notify the Dean of Undergraduate Studies of all successfully completed honors compacts no later than **the day following the last day of final examinations**.
7. The Dean of Undergraduate Studies will provide the registrar with a list of all successfully completed honors compacts no later than **the day that grades are due in the registrar’s office**.

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\* These guidelines for honors compacts are based in part on those established by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. See <http://www.uafortsmith.edu/Honors/GuidelinesForHonorsContracts>.

8. In the event that, due to circumstances beyond his or her control, the student is granted an official Incomplete in the course, the honors compact must be completed no later than the date when all other course requirements must be complete.
9. Any appeals involving an honors compact should be directed to the chair of the University Honors Council who will consult with the UHC before acting on the appeal. Normal university deadlines for all grade changes will still apply.