Honors Contract

Graduation “With Honors in Engineering”

Information Packet about the Engineering Honors Contract program at The Ohio State University:

* program information
* eligibility requirements
* application process

Updated 4/13/2021

**Honors Contract: Graduation “With Honors in Engineering” Distinction**

The College of Engineering offers outstanding students several ways of distinguishing themselves including designation as an Honors student and graduation with Latin Honors, Honors Research Distinction via an Honors Thesis, and/or with Honors in Engineering via an Honors Contract. This packet and application includes information on the Honors Contract program within the College of Engineering.

As an Honors engineering student, you may complete an Honors Contract:

* To support and challenge yourself with access to more advanced levels of study,
* To enable your creativity,
* To cultivate a sustaining interest in advanced education and research,
* To enhance your professional development, and
* To provide opportunities for you to gain recognition at the time of graduation for advanced, distinguished work as an undergraduate via the designation of “With Honors in Engineering” on your diploma and transcript.

**HONORS ADVISING**

Honors advising provided by the College of Engineering is key to your success in this program. The College Honors Advisors and the Departmental Advisors in your degree program are available to assist you in determining the choice of Honors courses that will lead to a challenging and meaningful academic experience. Advising expertise includes special areas such as combining pre-med or pre-law courses and entrance examinations with engineering curricula, combining major and minor area programs, and combining multiple bachelor degree programs—e.g., a bachelor’s degree in an engineering field with a bachelor’s degree in mathematics or business administration. The College Honors Advisor will coordinate your curriculum with the Departmental Advisors within the College of Engineering and in other colleges as applicable.

* Honors Information: <https://advising.engineering.osu.edu/current-students/honors-engineering>
* Schedule an appointment with an Honors Advisor: <https://advising.engineering.osu.edu/current-students/engineering-academic-advisors>

**HONORS ELIGIBILITY**

The eligibility requirements for applying/maintaining Honors status and applying for the Honors Contract program are as follows:

All Honors students in the College of Engineering are eligible to apply for the program:

* Students can either be admitted as Honors students or earn Honors status by completing 12 credit hours of college coursework at OSU and earning a 3.4 CPHR or higher.
* Students who lose Honors status based on grades may regain it by raising their CPHR to 3.4 or higher.
* Students who lose Honors status for not completing the Honors Contract deadlines/requirements should contact the Honors Advisors to discuss if regaining status is possible.
* To activate or reactivate Honors status, visit the following website: <https://advising.engineering.osu.edu/current-students/joining-honors-program> and follow the directions found at the link.

**MAINTAINING HONORS STATUS**

* **First Spring Term at OSU**
	+ Complete the Staying in Honors Quiz (on the Engineering Advising website), and
	+ Earn a 3.4 CPHR or higher at the end of spring semester.
* **Second Spring Term at OSU**
	+ Earn a 3.4 CPHR or higher at the end of spring semester, and
	+ Submit an Honors Plan Form. If the Honors Contract is the option selected on the Honors Plan Form, you must submit an Initial Honors Contract by the last day of spring semester.
		- No exceptions are made to this deadline even if you are on a co-op/internship.
* **Third Spring Term at OSU**
	+ Earn a 3.4 CPHR or higher at the end of spring semester, and
	+ Submit a Revised Honors Contract by the end of spring semester if any changes have been made to your Initial Honors Contract.
	+ If you were admitted into the Honors program upon admission into the University as first-year student, you must complete all 18 hours of your required Honors coursework by the end of this year. (student who joined Honors after their first semester of admission may complete their Honors coursework in their last year)
* **Graduating Students**
	+ Earn a final CPHR of 3.4 or higher, and
	+ Submit a Final Honors Contract no later than the 2nd Friday of the semester prior to graduation.
	+ Submit final verifications for contract experiences no later than the 2nd Friday of the semester of graduation. If an experience for the Honors Contract will still be in progress after the deadline, please contact the Honors Contract Advisor and provide an update on your progress by the 2nd Friday deadline.

**BENCHMARKS: PLANNING YOUR HONORS CONTRACT**

The Honors Contract is designed to recognize undergraduate students who complete a rigorous, well-rounded portfolio of experiences, both inside and outside the classroom, in order to enhance their Bachelor of Science degree in their desired field of Engineering. As such, the Honors Contract requires careful planning throughout your entire college experience to ensure that you attain experiences that develop your skills in academic coursework, investigational studies and global opportunities, and community leadership. You will need to determine how you will incorporate the components of your Honors Contract during your entire time at OSU. While each student’s Honors Contract will be specialized for his or her personal goals, interests, and accomplishments, here are some general benchmarks to consider:

**First Year**

* Begin enrolling in Honors and upper-division coursework as soon as you are an Honors student. Focus on Honors versions of the College Core (Calculus, Physics, and Engineering), FEH coursework, and Honors General Education courses.
* Explore the various student organizations, project teams, honoraries, professional organizations, and volunteer groups to ascertain which programs interest you. Start getting involved!
* Keep an eye out for opportunities to volunteer for various organizations on and off campus.
* If intending to study abroad, work with your Academic Advisor to plan the coursework you will take as part of that experience and identify which semester fits best with your program’s course offerings. Talk with an Education Abroad Advisor about the programs available through the Office of International Education.
* Investigate STEP (Second-year Transformational Experience Program) to see if you would like to participate next year. Participation in this program will provide you the opportunity to enhance your future professional development opportunities.
* At the end of spring semester, maintain a 3.4 CPHR
* Complete the Staying in Honors Quiz with a 100% on the Carmen Modules.

**Second Year**

* Continue to complete Honors, upper-division coursework.
* Participate in the student organizations you have selected and start identifying leadership opportunities.
* Complete admission to major coursework requirements of your major of interest and begin major coursework.
* Explore your interests and determine if you would like to pursue a Senior Honors Thesis, research publications/internships, a second major/degree, a minor, or other academic pursuits
* Maintain a CPHR of at least a 3.4 or higher
* Determine your estimated semester of graduation and submit your Honors Plan Form selecting the Honors Contract as the option you would like to pursue in order to graduate “With Honors in Engineering” distinction. Then submit an Initial Honors Contract by the end of the spring semester.
* Begin collecting verification items for any components you complete each year.

**Third Year**

* Continue to complete Honors and upper-division coursework. If you were admitted into the Honors program upon admission into the University as first-year student, you must complete all 18 hours of your required Honors coursework by the end of this year. (This is not a requirement for any student who joined Honors after their first semester of admission.)
* Submit your revised version of your Honors Contract to the College Honors Advisor by the end of the spring semester if applicable. (If you are graduating prior to your 4th year, no later than two semesters in advance of graduation).

**Graduating Year**

* Review your Honors Contract regularly and complete the remaining components.
* During the semester prior to your final semester of enrollment, submit a final version of your Honors Contract to the appropriate College Honors Advisor. (No later than the 2nd Friday of your final semester of enrollment.)
* During the semester of graduation, submit final verifications by the second Friday of the semester. If an experience for the Honors Contract will still be in progress after the deadline (i.e. presentation at the Denman in March, Honors Thesis, etc.), please contact the Honors Contract advisor and provide an update by the 2nd Friday deadline.
* Graduate with an OSU CPHR of at least a 3.4 or higher.

**HONORS CONTRACT SUBMISSION PROCESS**

Students submit an Initial Honors Contract, revisions as changes are made, and then a Final Honors Contract. Any time a student submits a contract, she is strongly encouraged to keep personal copies of their applications, as well as copies of verification items for ease of resubmission at the time of graduation.

**Initial Honors Contract (IHC)**

The IHC communicates the components you have already completed, or plan to complete, to fulfill the Honors Contract requirements upon graduation. This submission should be emailed to the designated College Honors Advisor during your second year. The Advisor will review your planned components to verify that they will fulfill the Honors Contract program requirements or offer recommendations for revisions. You will receive an email outlining your plan’s status and any adjustments you should consider or verifications you will need to submit. Please keep in mind that if you wait until the last day of the semester to submit a contract, it could take several weeks to receive a review since contracts are reviewed on a first come, first serve basis.

You are strongly encouraged to maintain a personal Honors Contract throughout your first two years and to meet regularly with the College Honors Advisor to ensure your plans will meet the criteria of the program. Please keep in mind that you can submit your contract at any point prior to the second spring semester deadline if you would like to plan ahead.

**Revised Honors Contract(s)**

You must submit revisions to the College Honors Advisor. Revisions can be submitted by making changes to the reviewed IHC received from the College Honors Advisor and resubmitted for another review. This requirement is in place for your benefit. We want to make sure that your new plan meets the program criteria, and if not, that there is still enough time to develop a back-up plan.

**Final Honors Contract**

Submitted to the College Honors Advisor no later than the 2nd Friday of the semester prior to graduation, this submission of the Honors Contract captures the finalized version of your components and certifies the designation for graduation.

Students can download a copy of the Honors Contract from the Honors Carmen page or at the following site: <https://advising.engineering.osu.edu/current-students/honors-contract>.

**VERIFICATION ITEMS**

Verifications are due by the second Friday of your graduating semester. For any experiences still in progress, students should email the College Honors Advisor an update on his/her progress by the deadline. It is recommended that verifications are gathered as components are completed. Verifications should be emailed directly to the College Honors Advisor who will use these to certify the distinction for graduation.

The College Honors Advisor can access the Student Information System to verify Schedule A coursework, the Honors Thesis, double-majors and minors (as long as they are declared), education abroad coursework, 4998 research hours, and ENGR 5170 hours. Verifications for the remaining Schedule B and C experiences require verification from a faculty/staff member/supervisor who can verify your experience and individual role, along with his/her contact information or business card. Verifications from peers will not qualify.

Examples of verifications are listed below:

* Email from a faculty/staff advisor verifying a leadership role in a student organization, short description of responsibilities, and the year(s) in which role was held
* Copy of a final presentation from a research-based internship or co-op along with an email verification from supervisor, including description of position and responsibilities, hours and term (i.e. SU 20XX) worked, and verification that the experience meets the “definition of research” according to the Engineering Undergraduate Honors Committee’s Definition of Research

Please keep in mind that an Honors Contract cannot be certified until all of the components have been finished. Any items that will not be completed until final grades from the last semester are posted (e.g. minors, second majors), may make it impossible for the designation to be printed in the Commencement program. However, the College Office Graduation Coordinator will make sure that the diploma will have the designation “With Honors in Engineering” printed in time for the Commencement ceremony, or the OSU Office of Special Events will print a corrected diploma for you.

**HONORS CONTRACT EXCEPTION PETITION**

In order to list an “Other, as approved by the College of Engineering Undergraduate Honors Committee” experience on your honors contract, you must have the experience pre-approved via a petition, so prior planning must be enacted in order to meet deadlines to maintain honors status. Experiences to complete the honors contract are planned in the first and second years of a student's undergraduate career, so students are not permitted to submit a petition during their final semester of enrollment.

**Petition Review Process**

1. Petitions are reviewed by the Undergraduate Honors Committee (UHC) for the College of Engineering during a UHC meeting. The UHC is composed of faculty representatives from each department in the College of Engineering. UHC meetings are held three times a semester during autumn and spring semesters. Meeting dates vary each semester based on the availability of committee members. For this reason, it is suggested that petitions be submitted by the first Friday of the semester. Petitions submitted after the last meeting has occurred run the risk of waiting for a response during the following semester.
2. The UHC discusses the petition and makes a decision: approve, deny, or further information needed.
3. The Honors Contract advisor will notify the student as to the outcome of the petition. The UHC has the

final say in the outcome of a petition. No further appeals will be permitted.

**Example of petition that might be accepted:** A student volunteered to serve as the Treasurer for an area United Way for an entire year. Currently only OSU registered student organizations/project teams are approved to meet leadership requirements. The student is not being compensated in any way and is gaining valuable leadership experience since she is actively participating in the organization.

**Example of a petition that would be denied:** A student who has exceeded the maximum number of volunteer items for Schedule C cannot petition for the hours to count towards Schedules B or C because service does not meet the spirit of the Schedule B requirement and the contract specifically states that a maximum number of 100 service hours/10 points are permitted for Schedule C.

The Honors Contract Exception Petition can be found on the Engineering Advising website: <https://advising.engineering.osu.edu/current-students/honors-contract>.

**DEVELOPING YOUR PROGRAM**

The intent of the Honors Contract is to guide students toward opportunities which enrich their college experiences and expand their development as leaders, scholars, and engineers. The Honors Contract supports the **G.O.A.L.S.**: **G**lobal Awareness, **O**riginal Inquiry, **A**cademic Enrichment, **L**eadership Development, and **S**ervice Engagement established by the Honors & Scholars Center.

Each student’s contract can be tailored to meet his/her academic, career, and personal goals. However, to ensure students develop programs with the appropriate amount of breadth across all three enrichment areas (academics, investigational studies, leadership/service), minimum point levels have been established for each schedule, as well as an overall **minimum of fifty (50) points total.** The prudent student will plan for more than the minimum points for added flexibility.

Students can apply points from an experience to one component of their Honors Contract. For example, if a student decides to earn points in Schedule B for completing an Honors Thesis, she cannot also earn points in Schedule A for the honors research courses completed while working toward the Honors Thesis.

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| Schedule A: Academic Engagement through Honors & Graduate Coursework |
| **Point Minimum** | 18 |
| Through the expanded learning experiences incorporated into Honors, Upper-Level, and/or Graduate coursework, students can develop agile scholastic abilities and cultivate an appreciation for lifelong learning.Students may earn points by any of the following coursework options:* Honors courses, including FEH Mathematics, Physics, and designated Chemistry sections
* Engineering 5695
* Upper division courses (4000-level or above) not being applied to degree requirements (degree requirements includes major classes, technical electives, and general education courses) or double major or minor requirements (if counting towards Schedule B)
* Graduate-credit courses taken while an undergraduate student.

Students earn a point for every unit (credit hour) of coursework. |
| **Additional Criteria:*** Honors courses taken as part of the Honors Thesis cannot be counted in Schedule A.
* Any version of Honors survey or English 1167H cannot be counted in Schedule A.
* Honors students are encouraged to take a significant portion of their General Education and College Core coursework at the Honors or upper division level, in order to capitalize on the enriched learning experiences incorporated into the design of these courses.
* All courses must be graded A-E to meet Schedule A requirements.
* BSMS courses can be used towards Schedule A only if the courses are counting towards the Master’s degree and not the Bachelor’s degree. If the courses are counting towards both, then this would mean that the courses do not meet the requirement that upper level courses be applied to degree requirements. (Degree here is referring to Bachelor’s degree because this is an undergraduate program.) Students are not permitted to count pursuing a BSMS as a whole towards the contract because students earn an undergraduate degree before completing their graduate degree.
* If you were admitted into the Honors program upon admission into the University as first-year student, you must complete all 18 hours of your required Honors coursework by the end of your third spring semester. (This is not a requirement for any student who joined Honors after their first semester of admission.)
* If credit from another university transfers to Ohio State as an Honors course, it can count on the Honors Contract.
* Honors Survey courses cannot count on the Honors Contract.
* If an Honors course from another university transfer to Ohio State as a non-Honors course (but was completed as an Honors course at the original university), students can petition for the course to count on the Honors Contract.
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| Schedule B: Investigational Studies (Original Inquiry & Global Awareness) |
| **Point Minimum** | 20 |
| By expanding their college portfolio to include experiences in research, external disciplines, and cultures, students can develop a sophisticated, nuanced conception of the world in which they live.Students may earn points by any of the following options: * Honors Thesis (20)
* Second major (20)
* Global Option in Engineering (GOENGR) (20)
* Minor in a non-engineering field (15)
* Minor in an engineering field (10)
* Short-term Education Abroad experience (5); at least 7 days and less than 8 weeks of international experience
* Semester of Education Abroad experience (20); at least 8 weeks of international experience
* Service-learning Abroad experience (10); at least 7 days of an international experience
* Research-focused internship or co-op experience (10 per semester, maximum 20)
* Non-research focused internship or co-op experience (5 per semester, maximum 10)
* International internship or co-op experience (10 per semester, maximum 20)
* Publication of research paper in a refereed journal; research related to Honors Thesis (15)
* Publication of research paper in a refereed journal; research not related to Honors Thesis (20)
* Publication of research in a conference abstract for a professional society; research related to Honors Thesis (10)
* Publication of research in a conference abstract for a professional society; research not related to Honors Thesis (15)
* Presentation of research study at the Denman Undergraduate Research Forum or on-campus forum (5)
* Presentation of research study at off-campus forum or professional society (5)
* Successful completion of ENGR 5170: Research Communication class (1 point/credit hour passed)
* Successful completion of the Second-Year Transformational Experience Program (STEP) (10)
* Other, as approved by the College of Engineering Undergraduate Honors Committee (maximum 20) \*

\*In order to list an “Other, as approved by the College of Engineering Undergraduate Honors Committee” experience on your honors contract, you must have it pre-approved by submitting an Honors Contract Exception Petition. Please read the aforementioned Honors Contract Exception Petition section before submitting petition.  |
| **Additional Criteria:*** Honors Thesis cannot be counted in Schedule B if student claims Honors research coursework in Schedule A. Information on Undergraduate Research/Honors Thesis programs can be found at: <http://engineering.osu.edu/undergraduate/research/distinction>
* Second major/minor: students must progress simultaneously through this program and their Engineering curriculum; the second major/minor must be finished at the time of completion of the Engineering degree. **Major/minor coursework cannot be counted in schedule A if being used in Schedule B.**
* Information on the Global Studies Option in Engineering (GO ENGR) can be found at: <http://engineering.osu.edu/students/undergraduate-students/global-option-engineering>. **Reminder:** if an education abroad experience is being counted towards the GO ENGR program, it cannot be used to meet other Schedule A, B, or C requirements.
* Information on Education Abroad programs at OSU can be found at: <https://oia.osu.edu/education-abroad.html>. Coursework associated with an education abroad experience cannot be used towards Schedule A requirements if the experience is being claimed in Schedule B.
* Buck-I-Serv trips meet volunteer service requirements rather than education abroad requirements.
* For research-focused internships or co-ops, students must actively participate in the research process and analysis of results. Verification of the position from a supervisor and final presentation will be required, including verification that the experience meets the “definition of research” according to the Engineering Undergraduate Honors Committee’s Definition of Research (see definition at end of packet). Students must register their experience with Engineering Career Services (ECS).
* For non-research internships or co-ops, students must register their experience with ECS. Verification of the position from a supervisor will be required.
* Internships/Co-ops must be full-time experiences in order to meet requirements and be held for six weeks or more.
* Completion of 4998 research hours cannot be double counted in Schedule A and/or a thesis.
* Information on the Second-Year Transformational Experience Program (STEP) can be found at:<https://step.osu.edu/>. Verification of meeting attendance, approved proposal, and project completion from faculty advisor will be required.
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| Schedule C: Leadership Development & Service Engagement |
| **Point Minimum** | 10 |
| Students can select to participate in leadership opportunities and co-curricular service programs at the university, college, and program levels. In addition, professional and honorary societies exist in each of the major areas within the College of Engineering. These societies promote scholarship, leadership, and fellowship while providing a chance for students to be an integral part of the university’s engineering community.Students may earn points by any of the following options:* Leadership role on a College of Engineering student project team (5 points/year, max 10 points)
* Officer role in a student organization and/or college or university honorary society (5 points/year, max 10 points)
* Member of departmental, college, or university committee (5 points/year, max 10 points)
* Volunteer service (1 point for every 10 hours of service, max 10 points)
* Other as approved by the College of Engineering Undergraduate Honors Committee (1 – 10 points) \*

\*In order to list an “Other, as approved by the College of Engineering Undergraduate Honors Committee” experience on your honors contract, you must have it pre-approved by submitting an Honors Contract Exception Petition. Please read the aforementioned Honors Contract Exception Petition section before submitting petition.  |
| **Additional Criteria:*** For an experience to meet Schedule C requirements, students cannot be compensated in any way for their time, including monetarily or through course credit.
* Leadership positions must be held for an entire academic year. If an experience is only held for one semester, it will not meet requirements. Half points are not permitted.
* Leadership on an engineering project team associated with a course requirement (i.e. FEH robot) or Teaching Assistant (TA) position cannot be used towards Schedule C requirements.
* Leadership must be verified by the organization’s faculty or staff advisor. Peer verifications from a student officer are not accepted.
* In order for a leadership position on a College of Engineering project team or officer role in a student organization/university honorary society to count towards the contract, it must be active and listed on one of the directories below:
	+ Engineering Student Project Teams: <https://engineering.osu.edu/studentorgs>
	+ OSU Student Organizations: [http://ohiounion.osu.edu/get\_involved/student\_organizations/directory\](http://ohiounion.osu.edu/get_involved/student_organizations/directory%5C)
	+ Volunteer Opportunities: <http://payitforward.osu.edu/>
* For verification purposes, volunteer service must be performed through an established organization (i.e. United Way, Engineers Without Borders, etc.).
* Buck-I-Serv trips meet volunteer service requirements. They do not meet education abroad requirements. Students are only permitted to count the hours spent volunteering on the trip and not the miscellaneous hours (i.e. traveling, eating, free time, sleeping, etc.). Depending on the trip, most students serve 30-40 hours.
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**Engineering Undergraduate Honors Committee Definition of Research**

*Why are frogs dying at such a high rate? If we just googled this, we would come up with about 26,900,000 hits. We could click on a few of them, read the information on the webpages, and we would know more about this topic. We could even write a report to summarize the information that we read. Although we probably learned something interesting, what we did is not research.*

*However, it could be the beginning of research, if we took the process further.*

This page describes what it means to do research. A research project consists of several stages, as described below. **At the undergraduate level,** a student might only be able to get involved in one or two stages of an ongoing research project. Nonetheless, the student should understand the entire generic research process, and for the specific research project in which the student is engaged, he/she should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the topic area and should make a meaningful contribution to the research, in order for the involvement to receive research credit.

**The research process.** Gathering information on the current understanding of a problem/question is the first step in doing research. It is referred to as a review of the literature (a review of the knowledge others have discovered about the topic). In other words, this is simply coming “up to speed” on the topic of interest.

**The essential aspect of research is the creation of new knowledge**. This can occur in many ways, including observation, planned investigation, design and analysis.

Some purposes of research include:

* Developing or testing a theory
	+ This is research that tries to establish why or how something occurs (consistently, apple falls downward from tree to ground – why?)
* Predicting an outcome
	+ For example: based on statistical analysis of climate data, a new computational model predicts that the world’s oceans will rise X cm by the year 2050.
* Developing or testing a new method or device
	+ Is there a better way? For example: using a standard screwdriver was compared to using a new prototype tool; using the prototype tool required less time and less arm muscle activity, but resulted in more defects than using the standard screwdriver
* Systematic review
	+ Collectively, what do all these separate research studies on topic Z say about the topic? A systematic review goes well beyond reading the existing literature on a topic; it involves planning and critical analysis.

Individuals who conduct research must identify **something new to study**, review what is already known about the topic, and develop a plan for gathering and analyzing data that will provide information to address the question in an objective way. Then conduct the study, analyze the data, draw conclusions, and examine the limitations of the study. Research requires critical self-examination. What are the limitations of the planned investigation? Could the results be due, in part, to the way the study was conducted? The final step is disseminating the results, to an internal or external audience, through a report, presentation, peer-reviewed journal paper, patent, product, or other means of communication.

Something new to study does not have to be something entirely new. It can include using new technology to study a question that has been studied before, if the new technology is likely to provide new insights, or studying a question in a new population (how does this apply to older adults, to veterans, to first generation college students, etc.), or applying new modeling techniques, etc. **The key is that the information that the research produces is new**. It is also highly desirable that the question being studied is interesting, meaning what you learn through your research will be useful, or at least interesting, to someone else.

**To reiterate, at the undergraduate level,** students are not expected to conduct an entire research project. They must, however, make a meaningful contribution to the research in which they engage and demonstrate knowledge of the topic area in order for the involvement to receive research credit.