

# THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

## HONORS COLLEGE COURSES

<b><u>Number</u></b>	02.01.29
<b><u>Division</u></b>	Academic Affairs
<b><u>Date</u></b>	November 2014
<b><u>Purpose</u></b>	Establishes standards and outcomes for Honors College courses and procedures for establishing and reviewing Honors courses
<b><u>Policy</u></b>	As part of its mission, the Honors College provides a unique, enriched, and more challenging academic experience for the Honors College Students. Accordingly, this policy establishes standards that distinguish Honors courses from regular courses, along with procedures for establishing and reviewing learning outcomes for Honors courses.

### Learning Outcomes for Honors Courses

Honors Sections of courses are offered in any discipline, at any level, and through a variety of means. Determining the set of criteria for such a variety of courses is difficult. Accordingly, the Honors College establishes learning outcomes for students who have earned the Honors Diploma or Certificate. These learning outcomes are:

1. **Independence of thought and research.** Honors Students question what they learn, develop their own viewpoints, seek original solutions to problems where possible, and pose their own research questions, problems, or creative activities.
2. **Strong critical thinking abilities.** Honors Students understand the relationship between evidence and conclusions, can sort relevant from irrelevant information, and can decide the best methods for attaining goals.
3. **Good oral and written communication skills.** Honors Students can explain their views and the views of others in clear, well-argued terms.
4. **Masters of their own discipline.** Honors Students know the required content and possess the necessary skills to be fully competent in their discipline. Yet they go further and seek a “depth dimension.” For example, they may know the historical and contextual origin of some of their content knowledge and skills, or they may understand the theory behind a practice or a formula better than other students.

5. **Possess broad-based knowledge.** Honors Students should have a strong arts, humanities, social sciences, and sciences background and strive to forge connections between disparate ideas and disciplines.

Honors Sections of courses should strive to modify existing courses in order to attain most of these learning outcomes.

### **Ensuring Satisfaction of Learning Outcomes.**

The instructor(s) of any Honors section of a course already offered as a non-honors course are required to submit to the Honors College a report of no more than one page. This report outlines how the course differs from the regular section and how it helps students achieve some of the learning outcomes listed above. The Dean will approve this description and it will be kept on file. It does not need to be resubmitted each subsequent time the course is offered, unless the instructor(s) have made sufficient changes in the course to merit a new report.

### **Procedure**

#### **Creation of Honors Sections of Already Existing Courses**

Honors Sections of already existing courses require only the approval outlined above, and do not require the approval of College or University Curriculum Committees.

#### **Establishment and Changes to Honors College Courses**

Establishment of new courses offered under the aegis of the Honors College (those that carry the HON designation), changes in the status of existing HON courses (such as number of credit hours, grading scale, etc.), or changes to the requirements of the Honors Degree and Certificate, must be approved by the Executive Council of the Honors Council, the Honors Dean, the University Curriculum Committee, and the Provost.

#### **Course Change Procedure**

The course change proposal originates in the Executive Council of the Honors Council. The Dean approves the proposal and forwards it to the Provost's Office. The Provost's Office forwards the proposal to the University Curriculum Committee for approval, which then returns it to the Provost's Office for final approval. Once approved, the Provost's Office will notify the Honors College and the Registrar's Office of the change.

#### **Review**

The Honors Dean, in consultation with the entire Honors Council, is responsible for reviewing these policies every 5 years and for making other changes as needed.