

Teaching an Honors Course

Our mission of the Weatherford College Honors Program is to foster the intellectual, creative, and personal growth of innovative and curious students by offering an advanced curriculum based on inquiry and research and dedicated to lifelong learning and leadership. Faculty members who teach honors-designated courses are encouraged to challenge themselves through their pedagogy by creating their own unique approaches to their course material and instruction.

According to the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), most honors-designated courses will incorporate each of the following overarching objectives. In designing your course for the honors program, you should consider how your outcomes will not only align with the ACGM but also those suggested by the NCHC.

1. Help students develop effective written communication skills (including the ability to make effective use of the information and ideas they learn);
2. Help students develop effective oral communication skills (while recognizing that not all students are comfortable talking a lot in class);
3. Help students develop their ability to analyze and synthesize a broad range of material;
4. Help students understand how scholars think about problems, formulate hypotheses, research those problems, and draw conclusions about them; and to help students understand how creative artists approach the creative process and produce an original work;
5. Help students become more independent and critical thinkers, demonstrating the ability to use knowledge and logic when discussing an issue or an idea, while considering the consequences of their ideas, for themselves, for others, and for society.

In addition, the WC Honors Program has the following goals for our students and courses:

Intellectual Growth

- Students will participate in enriched academic experiences, featuring theoretical and practical applications of coursework, student-led research and discussion, and expansion beyond typical coursework.
- Students will engage in original inquiry and develop research projects and skills
- Students will explore intellectually challenging projects and enhance critical thinking skills

Creative Growth

- Students will bring skills learned in their academic program to the broader intellectual community of the discipline and institution.
- Students will discuss current issues and innovative solutions to problems
- Students will cultivate curiosity and integrate learning experiences through reflection and self-assessment

Personal Growth

- Students will pursue service activities on campus and in the community
- Students will build community and a supportive learning environment in honors courses and as a team in seminar activities through peer mentoring, goal setting, guest speakers, and other communal activities
- Students will develop leadership skills and demonstrate personal and social responsibility

By agreeing to teach an honors course, you are also committing to:

- Teach a smaller student group of motivated, well-prepared and responsible students
- Teach only one honors course for the semester
- Teach an honors course as part of your regular faculty load
- Meet at least three of the NCHC objectives and at least one of the WC Honors Program Goals from each category (Intellectual Growth, Creative Growth, and Personal Growth) in your honors course
- Help with honors activities as deemed by the Honors Program Coordinator
- Mentor and advise honors program students
- Interact with honors program students at various Honors program events
- Submit your course outline to the honors program committee

Proposals: Instructors interested in proposing a course for the Weatherford College Honors Program should submit a Weatherford College Honors Course Proposal by the appropriate deadline. For each semester that a faculty member proposes to teach an honors course, proposals will be due by the middle of the previous semester, and faculty will be notified by an all-faculty email when the program is ready to accept proposals. Proposals are accepted on a rolling basis from the point of notification. Decisions about course offerings will be made in a timely manner by the honors program committee. Decisions will be based on course need, diversity of offerings, and sufficient evidence of honors course description and details in the proposal submitted by the instructor. Proposals need to be submitted to the honors program coordinator, honors@wc.edu.

The proposal form includes both a description of the course that you are asking to teach as well as a description of the specific changes you are planning to make to create an honors-level course. The WC Honors Committee requires that your course proposal show how you are going to meet at least 3 of the NCHC objectives and at least one of the Honors Program Goals from each category (Intellectual Growth, Creative Growth, and Personal Growth).

Note: Faculty are required to re-submit a proposal each semester they are interested in teaching an honors course. Honors courses are held during the fall/spring semesters only.

Approvals: Proposals will be reviewed for approval by the honors committee and honors coordinator. The class will be designated in the schedule as a normal course and course number and will be changed via Student Services prior to registration, based on approval.



Weatherford College Honors Program Course Proposal

Please indicate which semester this proposal is for:

Instructor Information

Name:

Department:

Department Chair:

Email:

Phone Number:

Course Information

Course Name:

Course Number:

Honors Course Information

If you have previously taught honors with this course, and there have been no changes, please enter "same as previous" for all questions.

Honors Course Description:

(This will be used to advertise your course, included in the course catalog and on the website).



Honors Course Specific Details:

Share details about the course assignments (projects, papers, capstone project, etc.) that will be used to challenge honors students. If the course is departmental, how does the honors version differ from the current course? This information will be considered by the committee to help decide if the course will have the rigor and pedagogy appropriate for an honors designation. The WC Honors Committee requires that your course proposal show how you are going to meet at least 3 of the NCHC objectives and at least one of the Honors Program Goals from each category (Intellectual Growth, Creative Growth, and Personal Growth).



I understand that completing the Honors proposal does not guarantee that I will be approved to teach an Honors course.

By agreeing to teach an Honors course, faculty also agree to the following:

- Teaching a smaller course of motivated, well-prepared and responsible students
- Teaching only (1) honors course for that semester
- Teaching an honors course as part of your regular faculty load
- Meeting at least three of the NCHC objectives and at least one of the WC Honors Program Goals from each category (Intellectual Growth, Creative Growth, and Personal Growth) in your honors course
- Being called upon to help with honors activities as deemed by the Honors Program Coordinator
- Mentoring and advising honors program students
- Interacting with honors program students at various Honors program events
- Submitting your course outline to the honors program committee
- Departments are responsible for creating, modifying, and cancelling Honors courses

Faculty Signature

Date