Honors Portfolio

As a program requirement, Honors students are asked to maintain a portfolio of their academic work to be handed in during the semester they enroll in the Project of Excellence (HONR 4195) for 25% of their final grade in that course. The portfolio will be used to assess each student's achievement and development, as well as to assess the Honors Program as a whole. All portfolios will be kept permanently on file in the Honors office.

Although the portfolio is not linked to a specific course or activity, Honors faculty and the Honors Director are available to answer questions, provide advice, or offer feedback. Nevertheless each student is responsible to collect and include materials that represent a thoughtful review of his or her development in general required areas of Honors Program courses, as well as in Honors co- and extra-curricular activities. Categories of evaluation will include:

- Writing ability;
- Critical thinking and meta-cognitive abilities (including consideration of multiple or conflicting perspectives);
- Research abilities (including extensive use of the resources in the library);
- Interdisciplinary perspectives on a given subject;
- Leadership, collaboration, and problem-solving capabilities; and,
- Service learning and community involvement.

Development marks a deepening of knowledge, understanding, and capabilities over time. Thus students are asked to provide multiple examples of each of the above outcomes (e.g., one from early in the honors experience, mid-way, and at the end) and to write a reflective essay for each inclusion, explaining how in particular this inclusion shows development compared to earlier samples. The portfolio should be thought of as an argument, and rhetorically designed and organized accordingly.

The Honors Program is most interested in your work in Honors courses and Honors co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities. We will be looking for evidence that the Honors experience has provided opportunities for significant learning experiences. However, if capabilities fostered and developed in the program impact other classes, the student may make judicious use of those materials.

Guidelines for the Portfolio

Size of Binder: one-inch with the student's name on the spine.

Portfolio Due Date: October 1 for fall project completion and February 15 for spring project completion.

Evaluation: Reviewers will include your faculty of record for HONR 4195, an Honors Program student, and the Honors Director. Of these reviewers, the director will examine the portfolio last, balancing the other evaluations and also considering the student's work in relation to his or her peers and previous students' portfolios. In some cases, a faculty member in your major area may also be consulted. Please see the Portfolio Rubric for more information about the criteria that will be used to evaluate your portfolio. Your portfolio will be judged accomplished, competent, or developing as a result of this initial review and ratings will be provided for each category. However, the emphasis at this point will be to provide you with constructive feedback on all elements. You and your faculty mentor will receive a copy of the results and comments that come out of this process. You will then have up to 30 days to revise the portfolio before submitting it in final form to the Honors Director. The director will evaluate the
portfolio again and advise you and your faculty mentor of the final portfolio grade, providing feedback on the results of your efforts to address concerns noted in the initial review. A final portfolio evaluated as “Developing” in two or more categories, or receiving an overall score of less than 80 points, will not receive Honors credit. Once the portfolio has met program requirements, the faculty of record will be free to assign the portfolio grade as 25% of the total grade in HONR 4195.

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