

HONORS CONTRACT GUIDELINES FOR UPPER-DIVISION HISTORY COURSES

History majors who are enrolled in the History Honors Program may contract for Honors Credit in upper-division history courses that are taught by faculty members and full-time instructors. The content of such a contract is at the discretion of the instructor. This document provides guidance to instructors in developing a contract that will align with the goals of the History Honors Program.

Goals of the History Honors Program

- Allow our most motivated and bright students to work closely with professors and with similarly exceptional students.
- Pursue their own interests while developing their critical powers and facility in writing and discussion.
- All History Honors students will write a senior honors thesis under the direction of a member of the history faculty.

Guidelines for History Instructors

The History Honors Student should:

- be given the opportunity to pursue his/her own interests, within reason and within the context of the course
- be encouraged to intellectually engage with course materials and activities in a way that goes beyond expectations for non-honors students in the course
- be given assignments that promote thinking, writing, and/or speaking analytically and historically
- have significant contact with the instructor
- interact with primary and/or secondary sources beyond those used in the course
- submit work of higher quality (in terms of analytical and communication abilities) than those of other students in the course
- be given a written contract that outlines the assignments and expectations for Honors credit
- submit the contracted course through the Helen Hardin Honors Program for certification as an honors course

Suggested Assignments for Honors Students in Upper-Division History Courses

These are merely suggestions. Instructors should develop assignments that will best serve the student within the contours of the course and the goals of the Honors Program.

- **Essays instead of or alongside course exams:** Rather than having Honors students take traditional exams, or alongside those exams, require them to write essay(s) that require deeper engagement with the material, additional analysis, greater incorporation of readings, etc. Students may also be required to discuss and defend their ideas in these papers in meetings with the instructor.
- **Regularly scheduled tutorials:** Regular meetings/tutorials with the instructor to discuss assigned (or additional) readings. Students may also produce written work relating to these readings/meetings, such as written assignments in preparation for the discussion, a weekly journal analyzing and synthesizing the readings, and/or more formal essay(s). These assignments could also be designed so as to substitute for traditional exams, as noted above.
- **Additional readings and assignments:** Assign additional monograph(s) or other readings related to course themes, which the student must review or otherwise analyze in writing, discuss with instructor, and/or present to the class.
- **Final research paper:** Assign a final research paper, with regular meetings during the semester to discuss the student's progress on assignments leading up to the paper. Ideally, this paper would in some way help prepare the student for the senior thesis. Students may also be required to present their research projects to the class.
- **Share work publicly:** Encourage (or require) students to create a poster for the U of M Student Research Forum, submit their paper to QuaesitUM (the undergraduate research journal), or otherwise share their work in a public academic setting. More opportunities for sharing undergraduate research can be found here: <http://www.memphis.edu/ugresearch/students.php>.