What constitutes an Honors (H) designation at YVCC?

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The central goal of honors education is academic enrichment. The ways to this goal are defined by the specific institutional context, the faculty teaching in the program, and the needs of the particular students. In general, honors programs are based on the belief that highly motivated and academically excellent students profit from close contact with faculty, small courses, seminars or one-on-one instruction, coursework shared with other superior students, individual research projects, internships, foreign study, and campus or community service.

An Honors (H) designation can be assigned to a course for a student if the student, in addition to the regular college-level course work, completes, during the quarter, a college-level project or paper that demonstrates deeper or broader understanding of course content. For an H designation, projects and papers should be student-led.

There are a variety of ways faculty can enhance a class for a student to create an honors experience:

• **Opportunity.** Faculty create opportunities for students to pursue the subject matter of the course or activity in greater depth and with more intensity through research and experiential instruction. Students take the opportunities presented and direct their own learning through research or other study methods that broaden or deepen their understanding of course material. This may be based upon community experiences: field trips, internships, service-learning, cultural events, etc. Additionally, there are more opportunities for writing and expression when appropriate for the class.

• **Experimentation.** Students and faculty work with a variety of collaborative and instructional models. The focus of the course may be on working with primary source material, data, or evidence in student-led research.

• **Interdisciplinary.** Faculty create opportunities for students to synthesize difficult and complex material, concepts, and information from a variety of interdisciplinary contexts. Students and faculty focus on synthesizing different perspectives and/or points of view.

• **High Expectations.** Faculty members have high expectations for student participation in class activities through seminars, discussions, group work, and presentations. This may include leadership in the class: leading study groups and class discussions and assisting the faculty in creating and presenting instructional materials. These expectations are met through extensive active student/instructor interaction within the confines of the course.

• **Presentation.** Faculty create opportunities for student publication and/or public presentation of student work, and students take the opportunity by presenting their work in class or elsewhere either on campus or in the larger community.

It is clear that much on this list is already being done at YVCC and the Honors Program seeks to build on this solid foundation.

If an instructor wants to designate an entire class as an honors class, the same guidelines would apply for the entire class.

To earn the H designation, the student must

• negotiate the honors project idea and criteria with the instructor prior to mid-term.
• complete the class with a grade point of at least 3.3.
• complete the project during the quarter according to the negotiated schedule.
H designations will be assigned to the course on the transcript when the instructor submits final grades.