

GUIDELINES TO CONSIDER WHEN DESIGNING AN HONORS COURSE AND SUBMITTING A SYLLABUS:

- Is it clear in the course description that the course is intended for all honors students and no prerequisites are required?
- Do you state how many credits the course is worth and how many times per week you will meet? (Exact scheduling may not be available at time of submitting the syllabus for approval).
- Do the required assignments, readings, projects, papers, discussions etc. encourage critical thinking?
- Does the title accurately and clearly represent course content?
- Is the course described in a way that is clear to non-specialists in your field?
- Are course goals clearly stated? (*Objectives and Outcomes*)
- Are week by week topics and expectations listed? (This may be a rough outline at time of proposal submission that can be improved with more detail as you make final plans for the course).
- What is the approximate number and types of books, readings or other materials that will be utilized in the course? (Ideally these will be listed, and anything that needs to be purchased will be indicated, preferably with an ISBN).
- What are the expectations for participation in the course? (For example, does the course involve reading and discussion? Field trips? Lab or project based work?)
- To what extent does each required element count towards final grade? (Example, will a 40 page paper be required at the end and will this count significantly toward the grade? Point values are not expected here but a rough proportionality is desired.)

Things the Honors Council likes to see in syllabi:

- A specific course outline
 - This is not to say that course outlines shouldn't be flexible, or that they can't change; simply put, a specific outline best showcases how your material is treated across the course. Furthermore, a detailed outline allows the council to see what you have in mind as a timeline for student work, the course material, course readings, etc.
 - Thus, a stellar course outline includes:
 - Date of class
 - Lecture/class topic or activity
 - Readings / work due for that date *with page numbers, hyperlinks, or BlackBoard access.*
 - Work due (if applicable)
 - Any other information of note
 - For examples of this, see Gadkar-Wilcox "History After Humanism," or Walker, "Music, the Universal Language of Peace and Unification."
- Grading / Student Work Breakdown
 - Please give a percent / points breakdown of how much each grading component is worth in a student's final grade
 - It is highly recommended that a significant portion of a student's grade come from their participation in the class—especially if the class is discussion based (usually upwards of 20%)
 - With work in general, it is suggested that an explanation be given to *how* it will be graded (what criteria), as well as the specifics of the assignment
- Explanation of course alignment with Modes of Inquiry
 - For each Mode of Inquiry you wish to attach to your course, please state these modes, and give an explanation to how your course interacts with the mode. Please link your course (subject matter, student work, etc.) to how it works with this mode
 - This is similar to competency alignment with the General Education Committee
- Objectives versus Outcomes
 - Please differentiate between your Course Objectives and Student Outcomes
 - Objectives relate to what your course aims to do; Outcomes relate to what skills or education students get out of the course
- **Always** feel free to contact Honors with any questions pertaining to your course or your syllabus!

What are the Modes of Inquiry?

The Modes of Inquiry is how the WCSU Honors Program evaluates a student's ability to think in different ways. A non-associate honors student is required to complete six honors courses throughout their scholastic career: the HON 100 introduction course, a final 400-level capstone course, and four other honors courses. Of those four courses, students must take at least one in each of the four modes: **Textual Analysis**, **Scientific and Mathematical Analysis**, **Historical, Social, and Cultural Analysis**, and **Artistic Creation and Analysis**. An honors course may fulfill two to four of these modes. The course number of an honors course relates to the number of modes, *not* the appraised difficulty of the course: ex. a 398 honors course includes three modes.

The honors curriculum is designed to expose students to four of these broadly conceived modes and to provide experience in how they shape questions and, ultimately, provide methods by which these questions are answered. Accordingly, your course ought to interact with these ways of thinking and questioning. The definitions of the modes are as follows:

1. **Textual Analysis** explores the various ways in which text conveys meaning. The word "text" is used broadly and may include a written work, an idea derived from popular culture, a ritual, a symbol, or another manifestation of thought.
2. **Scientific and Mathematical Analysis** utilizes the scientific process of induction or deduction, or some type of logico-mathematical representation or modeling (such as the scientific method), to understand an event or phenomenon.
3. **Historical, Social, and Cultural Analysis** examines the ways in which an event or phenomenon is shaped by history, society, and culture.
4. **Artistic Creation and Analysis** pursues inquiry through the creation, performance, and analysis of works of theater, art, literature, music, sculpture or other generative activity. Outcomes focus on the production of art and the critical understanding of creative activity.

In your syllabi, we ask that for each included mode, you provide an explanation to how your course interacts with these modes of thinking. For example:

Textual: Students will read, analyze, write, and discuss translations of texts of musical compositions, readings of letters of contemporaries, diaries, art critics, articles, and authors.

Historical, Social, and Cultural Analysis: Through listening and reading assignments, the course will examine the ways in which history, society, or cultural events are reflected in coincidental music compositions.

Artistic Creation and Analysis: Analysis of musical works will develop an understanding of the creative choices of the composer, and the performing musician as an interpreter (all from Walker, "Music, the Universal Language of Peace and Unification," Fall 2016).