**Honors Option (H-Option) Courses**

The Honors Option Course is designed to accomplish a number of things: 1) to allow the student to work closely with faculty in a chosen field; 2) to allow the student to see how professionals in the field do their research and study; 3) to encourage the student to pursue independent research; 4) to encourage the student to pursue in-depth study/research in the chosen field or topic; and 5) to enhance the student’s confidence about the skills necessary to be a success in the chosen field.

During the junior/senior years, all students will take three Honors Option courses in the major field of study. Honors Option courses will be chosen from the 300/400 level courses in the major. Students must confer with faculty members and obtain permission to do an h-option in a particular course before submitting an on-line contract (found on the Honors web page). By submitting the contract, the student is in effect confirming the faculty member’s agreement to direct honors study within the context of the upper-level major course.

The contract details the course number, semester/year, and honors coursework to be completed in order to obtain Honors credit. The contract is sent on to the Registrar’s office to ensure the student’s transcript reflects the upper-division Honors Option.

Contracts are due within the first two weeks of any given semester, and may be submitted the semester prior to the Honors Option work to be done. Honors Option credit cannot be assigned to a completed class, nor can it be assigned to classes in the general studies program unless by special permission from the Director of the Honors Program.

The final Honors Option is called a Senior Study. The purpose of such a study is to provide a capstone, a culmination to a student’s university career. Ideally, the prior two h-options could lead-up to a Senior Study. That is, if a student finds a topic during a first h-option, he/she could to develop the study through the second h-option, and finalize the study with the Senior Study. One example concerned a psychology major. She became interested in aggression and its effects on workplace performance. This h-option led to a study of the effects of aggression on women. Finally, her Senior Study combined these two h-options into a paper she delivered at two regional conferences in psychology and part of it was published. Several business majors routinely utilize h-options to lead to an internship within their chosen emphasis areas of business administration (banking, for example—finance classes and marketing classes lend themselves well to preparing for such an internship). Education students routinely utilize teaching methods classes within their disciplines to prepare lesson plans to use while student teaching. Creative writing students’ Senior Studies often are collections of poetry or short stories completed in beginning and advanced poetry or fiction writing. The choices for both h-options and Senior Studies are totally the students’.

Collaboration with faculty in the department can lead to exciting ideas and research for both students and faculty. Ultimately, the strength of these courses lies in the creative abilities of faculty and students. For most Honors students, these are the most exciting classes they take within the Honors Program.
Style Guideline for Senior Studies

To maintain a consistent quality of Honors Senior Studies, the following style guideline should be followed by every student for any Honors Senior Study:

- A Title page, which contains the title of the Senior Study, the student’s name, faculty mentor(s) name, department, course number and section number, term code (i.e., Spring, Fall), and year
- A Cover Letter, which explains the purpose and scope of the Senior Study (i.e., “This Honors Senior Study is in partial fulfillment of the total academic requirements of the UNK Honors Program…” etc.)
- An Abstract, a one-page (up to 250 words maximum) succinct description of the context and content of the Senior Study
- A Table of Contents, if necessary/appropriate
- Appropriate manuscript form: typically, one-inch margins, letter-quality type-written pages, appropriate pagination, and adherence to particular research style guidelines unique to various disciplines
- A durable folder or notebook to ensure the Senior Study remains clean and unharmed when archived

As well as the physical/cosmetic guidelines of the Senior Study, philosophical guidelines should also be followed (some of these are listed in the above narrative). The Senior Study should:

- Provide a capstone or culmination to a student’s entire academic career at UNK
- Provide a research or experience within the student’s discipline that will prove useful to the student post-UNK
- Provide opportunities for unique and innovative study within the student’s discipline
- Provide opportunities to study closely with faculty mentors in the student’s discipline

The Senior Studies in the Honors Senior Study Archive (MSAB room 112) are there for Honors students to peruse during regular office hours of the University. Perusal of previous examples of Senior Studies should provide students useful ideas for their own Senior Studies, and help said students to avoid plagiarism.