Honors Day provides a forum for students to share their honors work—and for Honors Faculty to highlight Honors instruction—for their campus’s students, faculty, staff and administration. This undergraduate research conference takes place on each campus at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters. Top presenters are nominated to speak at local and regional honors conferences and often present in sessions with juniors, seniors, and graduate students.

While we are proud to say Lone Star College honors students have earned a reputation at regional conferences for producing high-level scholarship, it is important to note that graduate-level presentations are not expected at Honors Day. The goal is a progressive development of research and communication skills throughout the students’ honors studies. Honors Day presentations should, however, reflect critical inquiry. “Book report” or simple narrative reflections do not constitute honors-level project presentations and are often the result of topics too broad to allow for the investigation of a specific research question/creative exploration. (See “Honors Project Rubric” for honors project criteria.)

**Honors Day and Honors-by Contract**

Honors Day presentations are required for contract students.

Effective honors-by-contract instruction provides a unique opportunity for “beyond-the-classroom” academic mentoring, either one-on-one or in small groups, with a discipline expert. In this way, honors contracts can be thought of as honors independent (or small group) studies. A contract expands honors offerings for more specialized courses, such as “Business Ethics” or “Calculus III,” but honors-by-contact is not a mere “addendum” to classwork or simply an administrative solution for courses “not making.” Students will be expected to:

- Apply critical inquiry to a question or issue encountered in the related course
- Develop a topic utilizing primary research and/or application
- Provide a written component appropriate for the discipline
- Present their honors scholarship on Honors Day

While students should follow The Honors College contract guidelines, they are encouraged to investigate topics that further their own academic and career interests. Faculty mentors are the discipline experts who facilitate critically-minded approaches to the chosen topics. This personalized mentoring and intellectual guidance is key to successful honors-by-contract instruction.

All Honors Day presentations should be vetted by the Faculty Mentor or section instructor. With contracts, the independent studies format and personalized mentoring of honors-by-contract lends itself to a focus on the honors project and presentation. Because the project itself plays a more intensive role in contracts, the faculty

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1 See “The Honors College at LSCS: Honors Contract”
mentors are encouraged to cancel a contract should a student not make sufficient progress to present on Honors Day.

**Honors Day for Honors Section Students**

In honors sections, the entire course is designed as honors instruction—from text selection to course scheduling to class assignments. The required honors project is an important component of the class. In fact, the honors project must be successfully completed for the honors student to pass the course. However, in honors courses, the project is part of a larger course plan. Therefore, while students share their honors project work with their class, they are not all required to present on Honors Day.

For sections, a description of the honors project assignment is included in the syllabus. While Honors Day presentations are the standard 10-15 minutes expected at undergraduate research conferences, section instructors may ask for shorter class presentations or use creative means to balance class time constraints with the presentation component/sharing of honors research. Instructors should nominate between 3-5 student presenters (per Honors Director request) to present on Honors Day. **Instructors should make clear that nominated students are expected to present.**

Again, Honors Day presentations should be vetted. If the in-class presentations are conference-length, they can serve as Honors Day rehearsals for nominated students. Otherwise, faculty are encouraged to have full-length rehearsals during office hours or another specified time for a full run-through with nominated students in preparation for Honors Day. Only students making A’s or B’s should be nominated.

**Honors Day as Inclusive**

Honors Day is an inclusive event for all Honors students, not just for the best-of-the-best. This event familiarizes students with expectations of undergraduate research conferences and ideally incentivizes students to present well for nomination to present off-campus.

To that end, honors directors encourage students to participate even if they do not present. Options include:
- Poster sessions for relevant disciplines
- Panel discussions
- HSCO officers serving as moderators and event hosts
- Guided feedback/reflection assignment as part of the co-curriculum requirement or portfolio requirement for more meaningful participation that furthers the development of oral presentation skills
- Starting at Orientation and with reminders from Honors Faculty, Honors College students are told to save-the-date for Honors Day. Honors Day can serve as a co-curricular requirement and may also be incorporated into a portfolio.

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2 Some instructors use creative methods to save class time. As just one example, they may have students take notes over the shorter in-class presentations. Presenters also post their PowerPoint slides online. Students are then asked to use their evaluative in-class notes to respond using online discussion boards—with the instructor as facilitator—so that feedback time is out-of-class. This assignment thus becomes a written evaluation assignment allowing both the professor and students to engage in critique.
Honors Day Guidelines:

- Honors Day presentations are filmed as a general rule for both instructional and archival purposes. Videos are added to our Honors College repository. They can also be used to help determine nominees for off-campus presentations. Lastly, these videos are instructional at workshops, in classes, and as part of conference prep sessions for students who will present at conference.

- **Students cannot present off-campus if their research incorporates human subjects (e.g. interviews, surveys, DNA experiments) without prior IRB approval.**

- Conference prep sessions, typically led by the honors director, are mandatory for all students presenting off-campus.