



Call for Submissions

Honors Online: Teaching, Learning, and Building Community Virtually in Honors Education

Abstracts Due: October 15, 2020

Papers Due: June 1, 2021

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This collection will include theoretical approaches to honors education in virtual environments and more tangible examples of reimagined course design and assignment design tailored for an online classroom. The purpose of this volume is to offer the honors community an opportunity to see how honors education can be reimagined for virtual learning while keeping the importance of community, student voices, and student needs at the center of our course design and classroom discussions. Articles should present and discuss demonstrable evidence of the effectiveness of their online/virtual instruction practices. While the collection will give space to voices cautious about what is actually possible in an online environment, my hope is that contributors can use that sense of caution to design honors experiences that serve our students well.

Honors faculty, administrators, and current/recently graduated students are welcome to contribute to this volume.

Ideally, this collection will include contributions organized into two sections:

- 1) Structural, theoretical, and pedagogical approaches to online education in honors programs and honors colleges (4,000-7,000 words).
- 2) Shorter pieces that outline assignments, lecture structures, social events, and extracurricular activities that work well in a virtual learning environment (1,000-1,500 words—flexible depending on content, formatting, etc.).

*Abstract for either classification of contribution should be 200-300 words.

Contributions should be submitted in MLA style. (Double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, etc.) The length recommendations above include notes and bibliography. For shorter pieces focused on assignments, etc., please maintain MLA style as thoroughly as possible.

Some of the primary questions the theoretical essays in this collection might address include (but are not limited to) the following:

- What opportunities for expansion of honors programs or honors colleges are available by harnessing quality online education? How can online learning options influence or contribute to an honors college or honors program?
- What limitations in access must we be aware of when designing online honors course offerings, and what responsibility do we have in the honors community to be advocates for addressing those limitations in access?
- How can virtual learning engage the students that honors programs are not currently reaching (adult learners, students with disabilities, students with full-time jobs or caretaking responsibilities, etc.)? What voices are we missing from our honors programs (from our student populations and our faculty pools) if we lack the flexibility of online teaching and learning?
- How can we use virtual environments to build community among honors students and faculty outside of the classroom? How do you structure a synchronous online meeting (in the classroom or for extracurricular meetings or exercises) to intentionally build connection and community among all participants?
- What impact does structural planning have on the efficacy of online honors programming? Can we create more inclusive honors programs and honors colleges by intentionally offering specific courses online during specific semesters? Can we offer more flexibility with strategically planned and implemented online assignments in hybrid courses? Can carefully planned and advertised extracurricular activities bring more voices into the building of our honors culture?
- Does online learning create or limit opportunities to make honors programs and honors colleges writing-intensive experiences? Does virtual teaching and learning eliminate the personal connection necessary for building strong writing skills in our students? Does it offer a chance to rethink what is necessary in our classes and bring strong writing skills to the forefront of our programming?
- How is an intentionally structured, planned, and executed online honors education different from the reactionary and culturally necessary online education we saw during COVID19-era remote learning? What lessons did we learn during the COVID19 pandemic about what works—and what does not work—in online teaching and learning? What predictions do honors directors/deans, students, and/or faculty have about what honors will look like in the post-COVID19 era and the role that online learning will play?
- What unique challenges do honors directors/deans face when implementing online learning options? How do we balance these options with face-to-face options? How do we prepare honors faculty to teach honors courses effectively in an online environment?

The second section will be made up of shorter pieces that outline specific assignments, social events, meetings, and lecture structures that honors faculty or directors/deans have implemented that have created inclusive and productive environments for teaching, learning, and building community in a virtual environment. While this may not be the place for syllabi (since those are published on the NCHC website, these shorter pieces might include (but are certainly not limited to) the following:

- Contextualized assignments that include detailed assignment sheets, supplementary documents, and instructive images (as possible).
- Approaches to structuring, staging, or delivering lectures in a virtual learning environment.
- Assignments or class meeting structures that make a course more writing intensive and focus learning objectives on effective written communication skills (regardless of subject matter).
- Social events or extracurricular activities that help students meet each other and find interpersonal connection in virtual environments.
- Approaches to preparing faculty for virtual teaching in honors programs and honors colleges (what myths should you bust? what caution should you feature in the conversation? what resources do they need?).