LAKE LAND COLLEGE HONORS COURSE GUIDELINES FOR LIMITED STUDENT SECTIONS:

What constitutes honors level course work and performance will be clarified below. However, in some cases, if not most, part of an honors course may involve teaching students who have the ability to do honors level work how to do so. Faculty teaching honors courses often may not be able to merely assign thought-provoking readings and projects, but may also need to guide and advise students on how to successfully meet such challenges. At the community college level we may not be dealing with sleek, finished products, but with high quality raw materials. If this is the case, it is our duty to mentor capable students so they may reach their potential for higher level study. So, honors level performances as explained below may need to be developed over time, but they should be apparent by the end of the course.

Honors courses should incorporate all regular course content with added emphasis on student involvement in learning and demonstrating higher levels of intellectual skills.

Honors courses should not be designed merely to generate more work for the students, but rather they should provide work that is more appropriate for high-ability, motivated students. Students should expect to spend more time on course content for an honors section than they would spend for a regular section, but the objective of this additional effort should be on increasing the depth and thoroughness of understanding of the course material, enabling students to gain a more profound appreciation of the subject than is typical in the regular classroom. In other words, the emphasis in honors courses should be on quality rather than quantity.

An important component of higher level intellectual behavior is critical thinking, which is included in the upper three levels of Bloom's revised taxonomy (see below). Students' learning outcomes should demonstrate that they have had to analyze problems, evaluate possible decisions or actions, and draw reasonable conclusions or generate unique solutions. These learning outcomes may be as varied as the students themselves. For example, one might take the form of cataloging specimens of rocks and writing a manual for other students incorporating the history of each specimen with the likely location of origin. Another might take the form of creating specialized educational tools for children with special needs after an investigation of critical periods of development in the brain. Still another may involve reading Aristotle's Poetics in translation and applying it to another work of literature such as a tragedy by Sophocles, Shakespeare, or Arthur Miller.

Honors courses should include some, if not all, of the following:

-Students will be introduced not only to the usual content of the course, but they also will be challenged to develop in-depth understanding of the subject matters of the course. Course pace will be accelerated to leave time for depth and breadth of content. Students will study and interpret aspects of the course such as historical development, cultural applications, and theoretical or philosophical disputes that should lead to the students' heightened appreciation of the discipline, thereby preparing them to succeed in upper division courses.

-Students will participate in activities that encourage them to become independent thinkers, risk takers and problem-solvers. Students may do more independent work with fewer restrictions, tailoring existing course assignments to reflect their own interests.

-Students will be encouraged to study and evaluate primary source materials in addition to discipline textbooks. Assigned readings will be diverse and challenging.

-Students will be given opportunities to develop discipline appropriate research skills, which should result in major documented papers or projects. Writing assignments will be evaluated not only on content, but also on grammar and style

-Students will experience a variety of learning activities which may include collaborative learning, field experience, debates, documented projects, interviews, service projects and presentations.

-Students will given the opportunity to demonstrate computer literacy and work with instructional technology which may include the use of word-processing assignments, internet tools for research, power-point for presentations, or course discussion via chat rooms and email.

- Grading should neither penalize nor reward students because of their honors status. The grades in an honors course are not curved, because the class is not a normal population. Student evaluations should be based on standards and methods that require demonstrated competency and mastery of the course objectives as well as implementation of the three higher levels of intellectual skills as described in Bloom's revised taxonomy (see below).

-The course syllabus should clearly present goals and objectives, assignments, expectations of performance, timetables and deadlines, and bases for grading.

-The faculty should model appreciation of intellectual pursuits by communicating the enthusiasm and satisfaction which a scholar derives from study in his or her discipline.

Faculty proposing an honors level course must provide the following for review by the honors committee:

A. Complete an INDEPENDENT STUDY CONTRACT (Honors box checked)

B. For comparative purposes, a copy of a syllabus for the already existing non-honors course which will parallel the proposed honors version.

C. Statement of Qualitative Difference (LIMITED STUDENT SECTION – HONORS OPTION FORM)
The honors courses should differ from non-honors courses in a variety of ways and so requires that the proposer include a statement that addresses how the specific goals of the course will differ from a non-honors course, including:
    a. Ways in which added breadth and depth of material will be included.
    b. Ways in which the course will provide exposure to the nature of scholarship in the field.
    c. How students will be exposed to, and use the discipline's methodology and research techniques.
    d. Amount and quality of work expected from students on papers, examination(s), and projects; and the method of grading that work.
    e. How an environment will be fostered that facilitates intellectual exchange among students.
    f. Ways that critical thinking will be an essential aspect of the course requirements, in other words, how intellectual behaviors from the upper three levels of Bloom's revised taxonomy will be implemented.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY "REVISED"

In 1956, Benjamin Bloom headed a group of educational psychologists who developed a classification of levels of intellectual behavior important in learning. This work was recently revised (Anderson and Karthwohl, 2001) to reflect current theory and practice. The taxonomy consists of six levels involving knowledge and the development of intellectual skills, from the simple recall or recognition of facts, which is the lowest level, through increasingly more complex and abstract mental levels, to the highest level, which is creation.

These six levels are described below. The first three levels may be considered to meet educational goals in a non-honors course. To distinguish a course as one that merits *HONORS* designation, it must involve the first three levels as well as intellectual behaviors that fall within the *UPPER THREE LEVELS.*

LEVEL 1 – KNOWLEDGE (REMEMBERING)
This requires the observation and recall of information, the knowledge of specific terms, concepts, principles, theories, dates, events, and places. Skills will include remembering, memorizing, recognizing, recalling, and identifying.

Some key verbs are: arrange, define, describe, duplicate, identify, know, label, list, match, memorize, name, order, quote, recognize, relate, recall, repeat, reproduce, select, state.

Assessment cues may include:
-Who, what, when, where, how ...?
-Describe...

Examples of the demonstration of knowledge may be:
-Recite a policy, poem, passage...
-Quote prices from memory to a customer.
-List the safety rules.
-Make a timeline of the main events.
-Define the 6 levels of Bloom's taxonomy.

LEVEL 2 –COMPREHENSION (UNDERSTANDING)
This requires the ability to understand information, to grasp meaning, to translate knowledge into a new context, to be able to interpret and explain facts, to be able to state a problem in one's own words, to order and group, to organize and select facts and ideas, to infer causes and predict consequences.

Some key verbs are: comprehend, classify, convert, describe, differentiate, discuss, explain, estimate, extend, generalize, give examples, identify, infer, interpret, paraphrase, predict, recognize, report, restate, review, select, summarize, translate.

Assessment cues may include:
-Summarize...
-Contrast...
-Predict...
-Distinguish...
-Discuss...
-Extend
-Retell...

Examples of the demonstration of comprehension may be:
-Rewrite the principles of test writing.
-Explain in one's own words the steps for performing a complex task.
-Translate an equation into a computer spreadsheet.
-Prepare a flow chart to illustrate the sequence of events.
-Explain the purpose of Bloom's taxonomy.

LEVEL 3 – APPLICATION (APPLYING KNOWLEDGE)

This requires the ability to use a concept, method or theory in a new situation, to solve problems using specific facts, rules, or knowledge, to apply what was learned in the classroom into novel situations in life.

Some key verbs are: apply, calculate, change, choose, complete, construct, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, examine, experiment, illustrate, manipulate, modify, operate, practice, predict, prepare, produce, relate, schedule, show, sketch, solve, use, write.

Assessment cues may include:
-How is...an example of...?
-How is...related to...?
-Why is...significant?
-Apply this information to produce ...result

Examples of the demonstration of application may be:
-Use a manual to calculate an employee's vacation time.
-Apply laws of statistics to evaluate the reliability of a written test.
-Design a market strategy for your product using a known strategy as a model.
-Write an instructional objective for each level of Bloom's taxonomy.

LEVEL 4 – ANALYSIS (DIFFERENTIATING AMONG COMPONENT PARTS) - *HONORS LEVEL*
This requires the ability to identify the organizational structure of something, to identify parts, their relationships, and their organizing principles, seeing patterns, to distinguish between facts and inferences, to identify motives and to recognize hidden meanings, to be able to subdivide something to show how it is put together.

Some key verbs are: analyze, break down, compare, connect, contrast, diagram, deconstruct, discriminate, distinguish, explain, identify, illustrate, infer, order, outline, question, relate, select, separate, test.

Assessment cues may include:
-What are the parts or features of...?
-Classify...according to...
-Outline/diagram...
-How does...compare/contrast with...?
-What evidence can you list for...?

Examples of the demonstration of analysis may be:
-Troubleshoot a piece of equipment by using logical deduction.
-Recognize logical fallacies in reasoning.
-Gather information from a department and select the required tasks for training.
-Make a family tree showing relationships.
-Conduct an investigation to produce information to support a point of view.
-Reflection through journaling
-Compare and contrast Bloom's cognitive domain taxonomy with his taxonomy for the affective or emotional domain

LEVEL 5 – EVALUATION (CRITIQUING OR JUSTIFYING) - *HONORS LEVEL*
This requires the ability to make judgments about the value of ideas or materials, to compare and discriminate between ideas, to assess value of theories and presentations, to make choices based on reasoned argument, to verify value of evidence, to recognize subjectivity, to make value decisions about issues, to resolve controversies or differences of opinion, to develop opinions, judgments or decisions.

Some key verbs are: appraise, argue, assess, choose, compare, conclude, contrast, convince, criticize, critique, decide, defend, estimate, evaluate, explain, grade, interpret, judge, justify, measure, predict, rank, rate, recommend, score, support, test, value.
Assessment cues may include:

-Do you agree...?
-What do you think about...?
-What is the most important...?
-How would you decide about...?
-What criteria would you use to assess...?
-Would it be better if...?
-Challenge the assumption that. . .

Examples of the demonstration of evaluation may be:
-Select the most effective solution.
-Hire the most qualified candidate.
-Explain and justify a new budget.
-Write a letter to …advising of changes needed at…
-Judge the effectiveness of writing objectives using Bloom's taxonomy.

LEVEL 6 – SYNTHESIS (CREATING, DESIGNING, PLANNING) - *HONORS LEVEL*
This requires the ability to use old ideas to create new ones, to generalize from given facts, to relate knowledge from several areas, to predict, to draw conclusions, to create a unique, original product from a combination of ideas.

Some key verbs are: arrange, assemble, collect, combine, compile, compose, construct, create, design, develop, devise, explain, formulate, generate, integrate, invent, manage, modify, organize, plan, prepare, propose, rearrange, reconstruct, relate, reorganize, revise, rewrite, set up, substitute, summarize, write.

Assessment cues may include:
-What would you predict/infer from...?
-What ideas can you add to...?
-How would you create/design a new...?
-What might happen if you combined...?
-What solutions would you suggest for...?

Examples of the demonstration of synthesis may be:
-Build a structure or pattern from diverse elements.
-Put parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure.
-Write a company operations or process manual.
-Design a machine to perform a specific task.
-Integrate training from several sources to solve a problem.
-Revise a process to improve the outcome.
-Sell an idea
-Design a classification scheme for writing educational objectives that combines Bloom's cognitive and affective domains.

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