



High School Honors Program Frequently Asked Questions

<http://wjccschools.org/departments/school-performance/curriculum/honors-program/>

What is an Honors Project?

An Honors Project is an independent project initiated and developed by an individual student. Honors Project proposals give WJCC high school students the opportunity to delve deeply into a subject of their choosing. The sky is the limit as far as choice of project, but strong commitment and solid research into the subject of the proposal are critical. A few examples of past and current projects have included...

- Construction of website to teach programming
- Video documentary- Williamsburg's civil rights era
- Running without stress (fractures)
- Mathematical study of sustainable grazing
- Creation of Williamsburg Astronomy society
- Meteorological effects of El Niño on the Gulf Stream
- Comparison of Chinese and American math pedagogies
- Concussion effects and prevention in football
- Case studies of the psychology of mountain climbers
- Historical fiction novella
- Sustainable guitar construction
- Symphony for four instruments
- Microbial source tracking of H₂O contamination
- Construction of a functioning sea perch
- Political activism for teens via Twitter
- Effect of air-borne pollutants on hemoglobin
- Economic valuation of technology startup
- Application of game theory and A.I. to Othello

How do I propose a project?

Three times a year students may propose their project ideas and descriptions to the Honors Committee. The committee includes three representatives from each WJCC High School, as well as representatives from Central Office (James Blair). Students should consult with their building facilitators (in your case, Mr. Lampert in room 113, directly across from the cafeteria) before submitting their applications online via the website listed at the top of this sheet. Prior to submitting, type your proposal description on a separate sheet of paper, thoughtfully answering the guiding questions asked:

- What motivated your interest? What preliminary work have you done to plan for such a project?
- What question are you trying to answer? What is your projected thesis?
- What is your perception of the depth and complexity of the project?
- What types of materials, research sources, etc., will you need?
- What is the tangible product? What impacts/outcomes might this project have for you/others?
- What **three or four criteria** might be appropriate to use to evaluate your project?
- What is the project completion date?
- What is the title of your project?

The first step is to submit your proposal to your school Honors committee. There are three deadlines to do this during the school year: one in November, one in February, and one in April. Several days after your submission deadline, you will present your proposal to the entire Honors Committee. The committee will read your proposal narrative and listen to your proposal ideas. The committee may have questions for you about the project. The purpose of the committee is to help guide students toward successful completion of their proposed project. After the initial presentation, honors proposals will be designated as *Approved*, *Require Re-submission*, or *Not approved at this point in time*.

When do I propose a project: Freshman, Sophomore or Junior year?

Students may submit honors project as early as freshman year and finish as early as junior year. It is common to propose a project in your sophomore year or in the first semester of the junior year. Presenting a proposal later than the end of first semester during junior year makes it difficult to finish a project of the depth and complexity required of the Honors Seal. Juniors in their fourth quarter and all seniors have passed the deadline to present a proposal to the committee and thusly are ineligible to apply for admission to the WJCC Honors Program.

What happens after I present my Honors Project proposal to the WJCC Honors Committee?

Each Honors candidate whose project has been approved will be assigned a Jamestown faculty member as a mentor; this mentor will be one of the Jamestown teachers on the Honors Committee, and his or her goal is to aid the student in establishing a timeline for progress and maintaining progress toward completion of the project. There is always the potential to meet with other students involved in an Honors Project and to update one another about progress. Largely, however, continual movement toward completion rests with the student and his or her own initiative, so personal responsibility, time management skills, and a diligent work ethic are critical to successful completion.

Is there any opportunity to work on my Honors Project during school hours?

The possibility now exists for Honors Program participants to enroll in a one-credit, pass/fail independent study (Course Code ISP) earmarked strictly for work on their Honors Projects. This opportunity depends on availabilities both in a given student's semester schedule and in Jamestown's High School's master schedule.

When does my project need to be completed?

Ideally, students should complete the Honors Projects by the close of 1st semester during senior year. This date allows adequate time to develop the culminating thoughtful reflection and oral presentation. Honors candidates' work ultimately will be judged according to a personalized rubric of three or four criteria for assessment jointly agreed upon by the student and the Honors Committee, then utilized for evaluation by the review panel.

Beyond the project, what else is necessary to complete the Honors Program and receive the Honors Seal on a student's diploma?

➤ **AP coursework**

Honors candidates must take a minimum of 5 AP courses across 3 content areas, receiving in those courses no grade lower than "C." They also must take the required AP exams for that coursework.

➤ **Global Language**

Honors seal recipients must complete at least a 4-year sequence in one global language.

➤ **Community Service**

Honors Seal recipients also design and complete at least 25 hours of community service, i.e., "voluntary unpaid work for the good of others." The completion of the service project includes a log of hours verified by a supervising adult from the community organization. These hours must be completed in addition to hours required by any course, co-curricular activity, or other school requirements. Students should complete their community service hours by the beginning of the senior year. The Honors and Community Service projects may be coordinated as two components of a single project.

What have students who have completed Honors projects found to be the benefits?

- Self-knowledge and personal growth
- Ability to work with others
- Potential to take a strong interest or passion to a level beyond the normal high school curriculum
- A self-designed building block for future study in undergraduate or graduate work
- Sense of accomplishment
- Development of time management skills

Who is the primary contact person at Jamestown High School?

Mr. Lampert, the school's Visions teacher, chairs Jamestown's Honors Committee. You can contact him...

- In classroom 113, across from the cafeteria
- In Guidance Office 124
- At telephone number (757)259-3600, extension 31124
- Via email at richard.lampert@wjccschools.org