

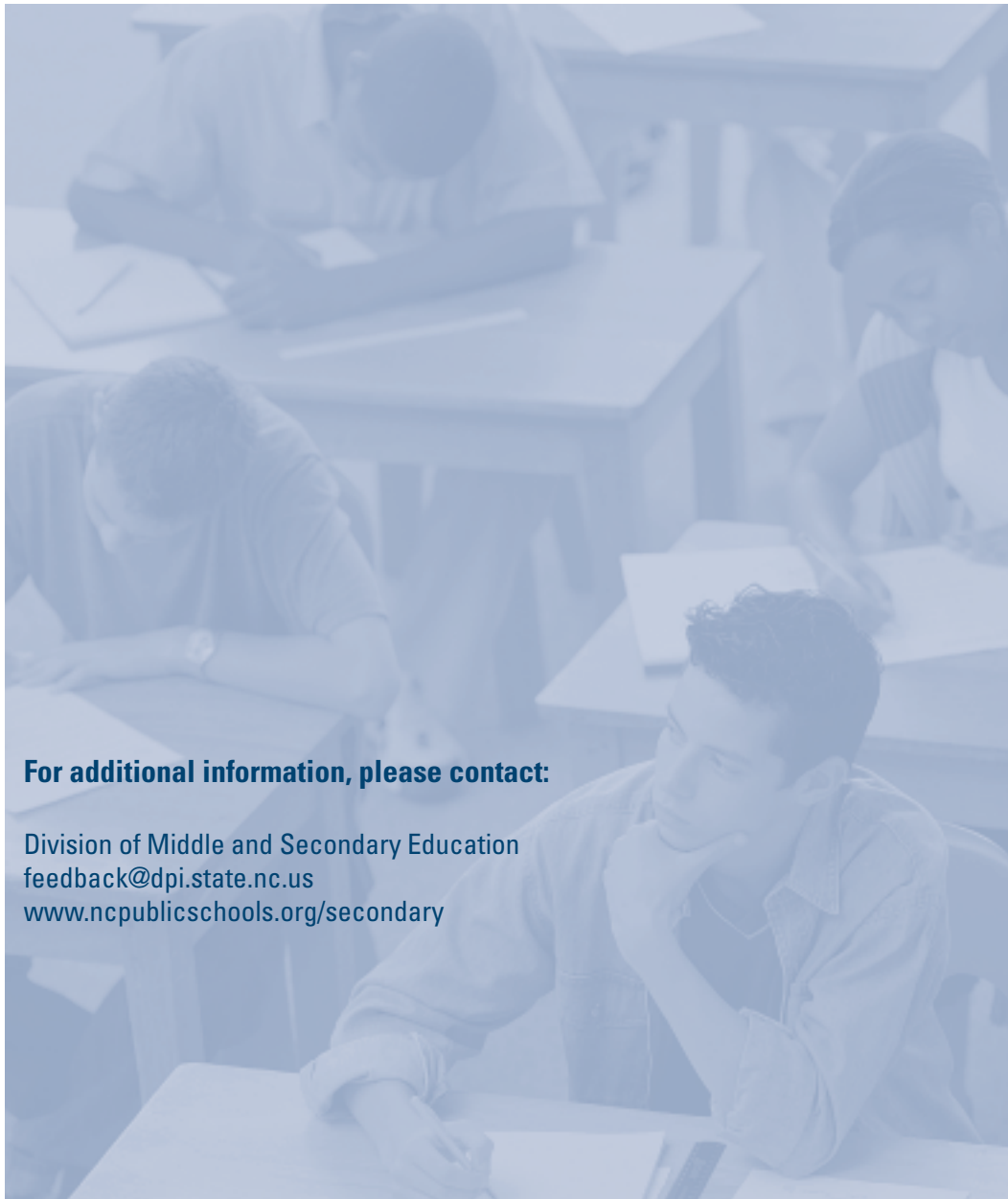
# CURRICULUM GUIDE CHECKLIST

The curriculum guide should clearly and concisely include the following:

	Included	Not Included
Proof of local approval for the course		
Course description (including length of the course)		
Goals and objectives		
Concepts (generalizations/essential questions)		
Issues particular to the course		
Expectations of performance		
Sample Assignments		
Time tables and deadlines		
Pacing guide/s		
Assessments		
Rubrics		
Basis for grading		
Instructional materials, equipment and/or technology		

The curriculum guide may also include artifacts to serve as evidence such as:

	Included	Not Included
Sample unit plan		
Samples of student work (student identifying information should be removed)		
Videos/DVD of classroom instruction		
Teacher notes		
Teacher's anecdotal statements		
Administrator's anecdotal statements		
Other:		
Other:		



**For additional information, please contact:**

Division of Middle and Secondary Education  
[feedback@dpi.state.nc.us](mailto:feedback@dpi.state.nc.us)  
[www.ncpublicschools.org/secondary](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/secondary)



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# NORTH CAROLINA HONORS COURSE RUBRIC



**PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction  
Division of Middle and Secondary Education

# NORTH CAROLINA HONORS COURSE RUBRIC

## Purpose of Rubric

The honors course rubric has been developed as an instrument to be used by reviewers of honors courses as well as to inform school personnel as they prepare and advance honors courses. The rubric is aligned with the honors course curriculum, instruction/delivery, and assessment/student work standards, which may be found on pages 168-170 in the *Honors Course Implementation Guide* distributed in July 2005.

## Forms

As honors courses are appraised, there will need to be adequate evidence that all the required sections of the curriculum guide are included and that each of the standards has been addressed. To that end, there are two forms that will be used for evaluation:

1. A Curriculum Guide Checklist to verify that various components of the curriculum guide are present and that any additional artifacts are identified.
2. An Honors Course Review Rubric that, for each standard, alludes to where the reviewer might find evidence; and provides a rating scale comprised of no, little, some, considerable, or exemplary evidence; as well as a space for reviewer comments.

Reviewers and school personnel alike may use these two forms to ensure that all the necessary components are included and consideration has been given to demonstrating evidence that each of the standards has been addressed. The intent is that both school personnel and reviewers are equally informed about the rigorous requirements of honors courses.

## Definition of Honors Courses

Honors courses are intended, and must be developed and taught to:

- demand more challenging involvement than standard courses
- be demonstrably more challenging than standard courses
- provide multiple opportunities for students to take greater responsibility for their learning
- be distinguishable by a difference in the quality of the work expected rather than merely by the quantity of the work required.

## Purpose of Honors Courses

The purpose of honors courses is to:

- provide the opportunity for advanced work
- promote rigorous academic study including practical application
- provide a means for students to receive additional credit
- offer challenging, higher level courses for students who aspire to an advanced level of learning.

Students and parents should be informed and understand that honors courses are more demanding and have requirements beyond those of standard courses. Honors courses shall be developed as an integral component of a differentiated program of study that provides an array of opportunities for all students based on their aptitudes, affinities, and interests. A well-developed academic program will have standard, honors, and may include Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate courses.

## Experiences

Honors experiences:

- sometimes involve risk-taking on the part of both students and teachers because the experiences are often more

exploratory, experimental, and open-ended than the standard classroom experience

- follow the same course of study as the corresponding standard aligned to the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*, or to locally developed curriculum standards
- cover the material in greater complexity, novelty, acceleration, or pacing
- reflect a defensible differentiated curriculum, which may well necessitate the development of an elevated course of study that goes beyond the standard one
- extend further than the traditional curriculum in both breadth and depth of study
- provide problem-seeking and problem-solving opportunities for students.

## Student's Role

Students may have to devote additional time and effort to honors work and, in turn will have greater opportunities for learning.

Honors work must enable students to:

- become actively involved in the literature and content
- learn about scholarly and creative processes by participating in them
- personalize the learning experience through imagination, critical analysis and application
- express and defend their ideas while attaining the distance necessary to accept constructive criticism
- incorporate opportunities for the student to become a reflective thinker who possesses the potential to become an initiator of learning and accomplishment, exploring areas of his/her interests within the designated course of study.

## Teacher's Role

Teachers of honors courses, whether new or seasoned professionals, should:

- possess the skills, knowledge and dispositions to challenge thought processes of honors level students
- understand and be able to implement diverse kinds of high school best practices
- have the capability of developing, implementing and evaluating defensibly differentiated curriculum
- know and use numerous teaching techniques to include: the teacher as facilitator, coach, side-coach, modeling and teaching in role or character
- be aware of current curriculum innovations and research in the subject area in order to develop and implement honors courses and materials that are both challenging and rigorous.

Note: The teacher preparation standards included in the *Honors Course Implementation Guide* will not be assessed in this review, but it remains the responsibility of the local administrator to insure they are met.

## Facility Requirements

Before these courses are originated, developed, approved and implemented, facilities and equipment for honors courses should:

- meet or exceed the curriculum goals of an honors program
- provide any special equipment, technology or materials that some honors courses may demand.



## I. Curriculum Standards

**CURRICULUM:** There is evidence that the honors course curriculum builds upon and extends the *Standard Course of Study*.

✧ *Possible artifacts to use for evidence: unit plan, teacher explanation, instructional strategies, course syllabus, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**CURRICULUM:** Curriculum is specifically developed as an honors course that is more rigorous, sophisticated, and/or accelerated than a standard course.

✧ *Possible artifacts to use for evidence: unit plan, teacher explanation, course reading list, assignments, projects, instructional strategies, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:** There is evidence throughout the curriculum guide that students will be expected to read and/or interact with a wide spectrum of more challenging, thought provoking, relevant instructional materials (multiple texts, primary sources, multimedia, etc.).

✧ *Possible artifacts to use for evidence: unit plan, teacher explanation, course reading lists, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCELERATION:** There is evidence through timetables and deadlines in the curriculum guide of appropriate accelerated pacing.

✧ *Possible artifacts to use as evidence: pre-assessing instruments, compacting forms, instructional strategies, reading lists, unit plans, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**EXTENT OF LEARNING:** There is evidence throughout the curriculum that student learning must go beyond the skills of recognition, fact gathering and recall.

✧ *Possible artifacts to use as evidence: student assignments, assessments, questions to promote higher levels of thinking, course readings, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Instructional Delivery Standards

**ALIGNMENT:** There is evidence demonstrated through teacher instruction/facilitation that the taught curriculum and the chosen methodology are aligned with the written and assessed curriculum.

✧ *Possible artifacts to use as evidence: unit plan, instructional strategies, assessments, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### Teaching Strategies

**INTERCHANGE:** There is evidence throughout the curriculum and should be demonstrated through teacher instruction that maximum interchange of ideas among students is required with an emphasis on activities such as panels, debates, reaction groups, scholarly dialogue, group investigation, seminars, etc.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: unit plan, teacher notes, video of classroom instruction, assessments, assignments, anecdotal information, student work, written formal and/or informal observation, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**INDEPENDENT STUDY:** There is evidence through the curriculum and should be demonstrated through teacher instruction/facilitation that independent study is required.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: assignments, readings forms, student-teacher contracts, portfolios, tapes of students working individually, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**RESEARCH:** There is evidence through the curriculum and should be demonstrated through teacher instruction/facilitation that self-directed, advanced student learning and research is required.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: projects, assignments, web quests, digital research, unit plan, teacher explanation, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**TECHNOLOGY:** There is observable evidence throughout the curriculum plan and should be demonstrated through instructional approaches that technology is integrated within the honors course curriculum and students are required to utilize appropriate technology to support their learning.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: digital projects, instructional approaches using technology, technology driven problem-based learning and/or project-based learning, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**INTEGRATION OF LEARNING:** There is evidence of integration of learning in the curriculum and should be reflected through instruction that students are required to utilize understandings from multiple content areas in order to master course objectives.

✧ *Possible artifacts that can be used as evidence: concepts, generalizations, essential questions, observations of instruction, concept-based units, lesson plan with an interdisciplinary approach, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**AUTHENTIC AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING:** There is evidence throughout the curriculum and should be reflected through instructional approaches that the instructor provides multiple opportunities for authentic (real world) and experiential learning opportunities.

✧ *Possible artifacts that can be used as evidence: problem-solving activities, decision making activities, leadership development, teaming, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**HIGHER LEVEL THINKING SKILLS:** There is evidence throughout the curriculum and should be demonstrated through instruction that higher level critical and creative thinking skills such as interpretation, analysis, constructive criticism and knowledge utilization (decision making, problem solving, investigation, logical thought) and knowledge creation are required.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: unit plan, teacher's instructional notes, assignments, projects, product or performance development, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONAL DIVERSITY:** There is evidence in the curriculum and should be demonstrated through instruction that the teacher addresses instructional diversity (interests, cultures, learning styles, multiple intelligences, and readiness). Teachers are addressing the diversity of the students in the classroom.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: teacher explanation, unit plan, assignments, multicultural resources, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Assessment/Student Work Standards

**DEMONSTRATION OF GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND CONCEPTS:** There is evidence throughout the curriculum and is reflected through instruction and student work, that there are numerous opportunities for students to demonstrate goals, objectives and concepts through performances, presentations, demonstrations, applications, processes or products with rubrics for each in evidence.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: unit plan, sample student work or products, assignments, video of instruction, rubrics, formative or summative assessment data, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**FORMS OF ASSESSMENT:** There is evidence in the curriculum and should be reflected through instructional approaches that multiple and on-going forms of assessment are used to include open-ended questions, original interpretations, authentic products, analytical writing, etc.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: teacher assignments, samples of student work or products, interviews to assess, video of seminar(s), rubrics, performances or demonstrations for assessment, student and/or teacher reflections, sample assessments such as tests, quizzes, pre-assessments, and/or criteria check sheets, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Use of Assessment

*Note: Assessment should reflect an album rather than a snapshot of a student's work and achievement. For teachers and students, there should be multiple uses of assessment rather than students always having to strive for a summative grade on every assignment or assessment.*

**TEACHER ASSESSMENT:** There is evidence in the curriculum and should be reflected in practice that on-going assessment is used to assess students for feedback, for planning, for guiding and reshaping instruction, for allowing students to gauge their progress or determine individual needs, and for grading.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: tests, quizzes, criteria check sheets, recorded interviews or discussions, feedback questionnaires, teacher assignments, samples or exemplars of student work (journals, performances, products, experiments, investigations, research, etc.), rubrics, unit and/or lesson plans, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT ASSESSMENT:** There is evidence in the curriculum and should be reflected through teacher assignments and assessments that some assessment is only used for student self evaluation and opportunities are provided for students, without penalty, to use the assessment to adjust or improve final assessments or products.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: samples from portfolios, sample assessments with explanation of use, teacher assignments, student work (may have relevant teacher comments), student reflections on work, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS (through instructional approaches):** There is evidence in the curriculum and should be reflected through instructional approaches that multiple types of assessment including self, peer, teacher, and outside expert assessment are employed.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: samples from portfolios, samples of different types of assessments to include formative and summative, list of expert assessors, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**TYPES OF ASSESSMENT (through teaching practices):** There is evidence in the curriculum and should be reflected through teaching practices that there are opportunities for students to establish learning targets, to monitor for clarity and accuracy, and to adjust learning strategies.

✧ *Possible artifacts to be used as evidence: student or student/teacher contracts, student designed projects/products or learning showing a progression toward improvement, reflective journals, or other artifacts which provide evidence of this standard.*

No evidence    Little Evidence    Some Evidence    Considerable Evidence    Exemplary Evidence

Comment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

