

Honors Credit

English & Social Studies at Catalina Foothills High School CATALINA FOOTHILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT

What is Honors credit?

Honors credit within a standard-level course is an option that allows students to pursue advanced learning opportunities in English or social studies without enrolling in an Advanced Placement or Honors course. Students who earn an average rubric score of 3.5 or higher across the semester will earn Honors credit.

How do students communicate their interest in pursuing Honors credit?

Students do not need to formally declare their interest in Honors credit, since Honors credit is awarded based on student performance – *not simply for completing extra work or projects*. In fact, some students might not realize they are interested in or capable of working at the Honors level until the semester is well underway. These students may still earn Honors credit based on the quality of their work. Teachers will communicate with students about their progress on an ongoing basis and will provide extended learning opportunities to all students who demonstrate progress toward advanced knowledge and skills.

How will Honors credit be determined?

All students in the class complete the same summative assessments, and their performance is measured with a rubric. On any given assessment, any student can score at the Honors level. This means that they have demonstrated both proficiency of the selected course standards and also mastery of Honors-level learning goals. Students who *consistently* score at the Honors level (with an overall average of 3.5 or higher) will be awarded Honors credit at the end of the semester.

In essence, students who earn Honors credit have demonstrated mastery at the Basic, Proficient, *and* Honors levels. The Basic (Level 2) learning goals are foundational to the more complex learning at the higher levels. The Proficient (Level 3) learning goals are the rigorous, course-level learning goals. The Honors-level (Level 4) learning goals are an extension of the Proficient-level learning goals and demand that students extend and apply their knowledge and skills, often in new contexts, or exhibit more in-depth understanding (see Table below).

Score	General Description of Performance at each Level	(Sample) English 9 Learning Goals	(Sample) Global Issues 9 Learning Goals
4 Honors	In addition to mastery of basic and complex skills, demonstrates mastery of Honors-level knowledge and skills, such as synthesis, transfer, integration of multiple perspectives and resources, evaluation, etc.	Students will be able to describe how the author’s implicit assumptions and biases affect the argument.	Students will be able to integrate multiple perspectives into analysis of a country’s culture.
3 Proficient	Demonstrates mastery of basic and complex skills and/or knowledge, such as analysis, application, inferencing, etc.	Students will be able to explain how well the author’s evidence and reasoning support the argument.	Students will be able to explain how current events and trends are related to a country’s history and culture.
2 Basic	Demonstrates mastery of basic skills / knowledge, such as terms and details, definitions, basic inferences, and processes.	Students will be able to identify different pieces of evidence used to support the argument.	Students will be able to identify important aspects of a country’s history and culture.
1 Novice	Needs extensive support to demonstrate partial knowledge of simpler details and processes.	<i>N/A</i> <i>No learning goals are identified at this level.</i>	<i>N/A</i> <i>No learning goals are identified at this level.</i>

How will teachers support students toward achieving Honors-level learning goals?

As part of every robust learning environment, teachers differentiate instruction to support *all* students in achieving course learning goals. The ultimate goal of instructional differentiation for Honors credit is to prepare students to achieve both the Proficient and Honors-level goals.

Differentiated instruction for all students in the classroom *might* include:

- Student choice of topic, product, etc.
- Flexible grouping (heterogeneous groups, homogeneous groups, individual, small group, whole class, etc.)
- Mini-lessons and breakout sessions
- Materials at varying levels of complexity
- Suggested resources
- In-class peer tutoring
- Student teaching and presentation
- Teacher-Student one-on-one and small group conferencing
- Leadership opportunities
- Cultural experiences or community events outside of the classroom

What is the student’s responsibility in earning Honors credit?

Students who wish to earn Honors credit will need to maximize their learning in and out of the classroom. Alongside the teacher’s efforts to support Honors-level learning, students must demonstrate the initiative, work ethic, and commitment required to achieve Honors learning goals.

Honors work is not about *doing more*, but it is sometimes necessary for students to read or write beyond the expectations for proficiency in order to gain and/or express a greater depth of knowledge and skill. It is difficult, for example, for students to synthesize multiple perspectives on a topic if they have only read one account from a single author. To achieve the Honors-level learning goal, a student would need to examine additional sources.

How does Honors credit affect a student’s grade, GPA, and transcript?

Honors credit will be awarded at the end of each semester to students who earn an average rubric score of 3.5 or higher in the course. Students who earn Honors credit will automatically receive a .25 increase in their GPA for the course, as with a traditional Honors class. Final course grades receive an Honors designation. For example, students who earn Honors credit in Global Issues will see “Global Issues A+ (H)” on their transcript. It is possible to earn Honors credit during one or both semesters.

How should a student decide whether to enroll in an AP / Honors course or to pursue Honors credit in a standard-level class?

Possible considerations during course selection might include:

Interest	Students who are passionate about English or social studies should take an advanced course
Balance	The number of advanced courses or extracurricular activities in the student’s schedule
Commitment	Students cannot drop Advanced Placement and Honors courses should the pace or complexity of the work become more challenging than anticipated
Transcript Designation	Students who complete an AP or Honors-level course will automatically earn the AP/Honors designation on the transcript, regardless of their ultimate grade in the course, whereas a student in a standard-level course must earn an average score of 3.5 or higher in order to receive Honors credit for the course, and have it indicated on their transcript
AP Exams / College Credit	Desire to prepare for the AP exam and earn AP college credit
Learning Environment Preferences	Students pursuing Honors credit will work toward higher-level learning goals than many of their classroom peers, whereas students in Honors/AP classes will typically work to achieve the same Honors-level learning goals as their peers

Honors Credit

Algebra 1 at Catalina Foothills High School CATALINA FOOTHILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT

What is Honors credit?

Honors credit within a standard-level course is an option that allows students to pursue advanced learning opportunities in mathematics without enrolling in an Honors course. Students who earn an average of a 93% or higher across the semester and who earn a 93% or higher on the semester Final Assessment will earn Honors credit for the semester.

How do students communicate their interest in pursuing Honors credit?

Students do not need to formally declare their interest in Honors credit, since Honors credit is awarded based on student performance – *not simply for completing extra work or projects*. In fact, some students might not realize they are interested in or capable of working at the Honors level until the semester is well underway. These students may still earn Honors credit based on the quality of their work. Teachers will communicate with students about their progress on an ongoing basis and will provide extended learning opportunities to all students who demonstrate progress toward advanced knowledge and skills.

How will Honors credit be determined?

All students in the class complete the same summative assessments, and their performance is measured with the Mathematics Scoring Rubric. On any given assessment, a student can earn a score at the Honors level. This means that they have demonstrated both proficiency of the selected course standards and also mastery of Honors-level learning goals. Students who *consistently* score at the Honors level (with an overall average of 93% or higher and who earn a 93% or higher on the semester Final Assessment) will be awarded Honors credit at the end of the semester.

In essence, students who earn Honors credit have demonstrated mastery at the Basic, Proficient, *and* Honors levels. The Basic (Level 2) learning goals are foundational to the more complex learning at the higher levels. The Proficient (Level 3) learning goals are the rigorous, course-level learning goals. The Honors-level (Level 4) learning goals are an extension of the Proficient-level learning goals and demand that students extend and apply their knowledge and skills, often in new contexts, or exhibit more in-depth understanding (see Table below).

Score	General Description of Performance at each Level	(Sample) Algebra 1 Learning Goals
4 Honors	In addition to mastery of basic and complex skills, demonstrates mastery of Honors-level knowledge and skills, such as synthesis, transfer, integration of multiple perspectives and resources, evaluation, etc.	Students will be able to analyze a context that matches an expression given in function notation and then interpret critical attributes of the function in context, including domain and range.
3 Proficient	Demonstrates mastery of basic and complex skills and/or knowledge, such as analysis, application, inferencing, etc.	Students will be able to evaluate function notation and interpret the meaning, for example $f(x + 2)$ and $f(0)$.
2 Basic	Demonstrates mastery of basic skills /knowledge, such as terms and details, definitions, basic inferences, and processes.	Students will be able to evaluate equations at given values.
1 Novice	Needs extensive support to demonstrate partial knowledge of simpler details and processes.	<i>N/A</i> <i>No learning goals are identified at this level.</i>

How will teachers support students toward achieving Honors-level learning goals?

As part of every robust learning environment, teachers differentiate instruction to support *all* students in achieving course learning goals. The ultimate goal of instructional differentiation for Honors credit is to prepare students to achieve both the Proficient and Honors-level goals.

Differentiated instruction for all students in the classroom *might* include:

- Student choice of topic, product, etc.
- Flexible grouping (heterogeneous groups, homogeneous groups, individual, small group, whole class, etc.)
- Mini-lessons and breakout sessions
- Materials at varying levels of complexity
- In-class peer tutoring
- Student teaching and presentation
- Teacher-Student one-on-one and small group conferencing
- Leadership opportunities

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Students who wish to earn Honors credit will need to maximize their learning in and out of the classroom. Alongside the teacher’s efforts to support Honors-level learning, students must demonstrate the initiative, work ethic, and commitment required to achieve Honors learning goals.

How does Honors credit affect a student’s grade, GPA, and transcript?

Honors credit will be awarded at the end of each semester to students who earn an average of a 93% or higher across the semester and who earn a 93% or higher on the semester Final Assessment. Students who earn Honors credit will automatically receive a .25 increase in their GPA for the course, as with a traditional Honors class. Final course grades receive an Honors designation on the transcript. It is possible to earn Honors credit during one or both semesters.

How should a student decide to pursue Honors credit in Algebra 1?

Possible considerations might include:

Interest	Students who are passionate about math should pursue Honors credit
Balance	The number of advanced courses or extracurricular activities in the student’s schedule
Honors /AP coursework	Desire to prepare for future Honors/AP coursework