Faculty-Student Agreement
A How-To Guide

This document provides an in-depth review of the Honors College Faculty–Student Agreement process. This document is a great resource for students, instructors, and advisors. Students are required to submit the Faculty–Student Agreement (FSA) Google Form from their Canvas Honors Credit Tracker to notify the Honors College of their plan to pursue an FSA.

Due dates for the FSA Google Form are:

- Fall or Spring term: 11:59 pm on the Friday of the 3rd week of classes
- Winter or Summer term: 11:59 pm on the Friday of the 1st week of classes

General Information
An FSA is a way to earn honors credit in Element Two: Disciplinary Depth and Element Three: Transdisciplinary Capabilities of the Honors Laureate Diploma. There is no limit to the number of FSA honors credits students may count toward their Honors Laureate Diploma.

An FSA is a coursework contract between the course instructor and an honors student. The agreement stipulates that if a student completes mutually agreed upon coursework that is in addition to the already established course syllabus—and the instructor confirms that the work is completed to their satisfaction—then the Honors College will award honors credit for the course to the student. The honors credit awarded is equal to the academic course credits.

Any Virginia Tech, non-honors course is eligible for an FSA. An FSA may not be applied to an existing way to earn honors credit. However, an FSA may be applied to a study abroad course to earn both study abroad honors credit (if the experience abroad is completed) and FSA honors credit simultaneously. The study abroad course must appear on the Virginia Tech transcript.

Purpose and Process
The purpose of an FSA is to allow students to go deeper into the content and experience of a course and discipline. It is also an excellent way to establish a collegial relationship with an instructor. Therefore, the course should be chosen carefully and the additional work should reflect a student’s interests.

There are no specific requirements for the type of additional FSA coursework. This decision is intentionally left open to students and instructors to allow students in any major to pursue an FSA based on the characteristics of any individual discipline or course. Any written work should be at least 10-15 pages total. All other types of FSA coursework should be comparable in intensity and commitment to this requirement to ensure an equivalent level of rigor across the spectrum of diverse FSA coursework.

The Honors College facilitates administration of the process but does not control the details of the agreement between the instructor and the student. The course instructor serves as the advisor,
consultant, and evaluator of the FSA coursework as outlined in the agreement. Instructors reserve the right to decline an FSA request or to decline to award honors credit for any reason at their discretion. Students who wish to cancel an FSA should notify their instructor and the Honors College.

More FSA information is available below and in the Canvas Honors Credit Tracker. Please email honors@vt.edu with any questions.

**A Step-by-Step FSA Guide for Students**

1. **Before each term**, review your schedule and determine which course seems particularly interesting and may be a good candidate for an FSA given your plan to earn an Honors Laureate Diploma. Honors recommends pursuing no more than two FSAs each term.
   
   a. In addition to your primary major checksheet, the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) in Hokie Spa can help you to determine whether an FSA-activated course counts in Element Two: Disciplinary Depth (E2) or Element Three: Transdisciplinary Capabilities (E3) of the Honors Laureate Diploma.

2. **Speak with the course instructor well before the due date to give the instructor plenty of time to consider your FSA request.** It is your responsibility to present preliminary ideas for the FSA coursework based on your review of this document and the course syllabus. Although you will work together with your instructor to determine the additional coursework and deadline expectations, your instructor has the final say on all FSA plans.

3. Once the details are settled and the instructor approves, complete the FSA Google Form in your Canvas Honors Credit Tracker by the due date. Due dates for the FSA Google Form are:
   
   - Fall or Spring term: 11:59 pm on the Friday of the 3rd week of classes
   - Winter or Summer term: 11:59 pm on the Friday of the 1st week of classes

4. The Honors College reviews all submissions and will reach out to you with any questions.

5. The Honors College will email both you and your instructor to confirm the details as submitted in the FSA Google Form so that everyone has a record of the FSA and so you may proceed confidently with your FSA.

6. **You should stay in constant communication with your instructor throughout the semester as you complete the FSA work.** Your instructor—not the Honors College—provides final FSA approval at the end of term.

7. You must submit all FSA work to the instructor by the last day of classes each term.

8. The Honors College will begin reaching out to your instructor during the last week of the term to inquire whether you completed the FSA to their satisfaction and the Honors College may award you honors credit for the FSA.

9. At the conclusion of the term, the Honors College begins awarding FSA honors credit in your Canvas Honors Credit Tracker equal to the academic course credit.
More Information

FSA Google Form
The FSA Google Form requires the following information:
- Primary major
- FSA course prefix and number (ex. MATH 2375)
- FSA course title and number of course credits
- FSA instructor first name, last name, and email address
- Detailed explanation of instructor-approved FSA coursework
- Whether the course applies to E2: Disciplinary Depth or E3: Transdisciplinary Capabilities of the Honors Laureate Diploma

Examples of FSA Coursework
There are no specific requirements for the type of FSA coursework. This decision is intentionally left open to students and instructors to allow students in any major to pursue an FSA based on the characteristics of any individual discipline and course.

*Any written work should be at least 10-15 pages total.* All other types of FSA coursework should be comparable in intensity and commitment to this requirement to ensure an equivalent level of rigor across the spectrum of diverse FSA coursework.

The following are examples of the most popular types of FSA coursework:

- a project related to course content (artwork, models, original performance, fabrication, lab work, podcast, videos, etc.)
- creating a simple app or software program
- Presenting at a conference related to the discipline
- A [PowerPoint, poster, etc.] presentation to the instructor and/or the class on a topic related to course content
- written work related to course content (literature review, research paper, essays, journal entries, etc.)