

## *Science Honors Challenge Program*

Students who seek extended learning opportunities may elect to receive honors credit in biology. The Honors Challenge Program is intended to provide students with extended learning opportunities within their course of study. This opportunity includes independent study tasks that provide additional depth of content, advanced concepts and a chance for more authentic applications of skills and knowledge.

### **Honors Work**

Since one of the goals of the NAHS Biology Honors Challenge Program is to help students achieve a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of biology, Honors activities within a class will likely include one or more of the following:

- Writing papers on a topic and of a length agreed to by the student and instructor.
- Preparing and giving presentations for classes.
- Researching topics of special interest to the student which are pertinent to the subject matter or to the student's Honors project and which specifically address one or more of the California State Science Standards for Biology.
- Studying concepts, principles, or people in somewhat more depth than is usually achieved in regular courses.
- Honors work will emphasize problem solving through the use of analysis, synthesis, collaboration, and creative and critical thinking.

### **Cultural and Social Events**

As part of their experience, Honors students will attend events involving speakers on the CSUN campus in addition to visiting and reporting on at least one college lecture course. At least one social event will be organized each year to give Honors students and faculty an opportunity to get together.

### **Service Learning**

NAHS encourages Honors students to participate in projects or work which provide a service to the larger community. This may be accomplished through coursework or the student's Honors project.

### **Honors Project**

Students will choose to participate in an honors project during each semester of their sophomore year. This project is selected, designed, and carried out by the student under the direction of a teacher. The Honors project, which might also provide a service to the community, is especially appropriate for students who wish to extend their knowledge.

After signing up for their Honors classes, Honors students will then meet with their teacher individually to work out the details of the contract. Once the contract has been successfully completed with a B grade or better, the grade will be entered on the student's transcript with a special Honors designation.

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**Biology Honors Challenge Contract**

The following criteria represent the *minimum standards* for participation in and designation of Honors in Biology.

**Students will demonstrate a mastery of the course's fundamental skills and concepts and exhibit a high level of academic understanding**

- Students will earn a final grade for the course of B or better. A minimum interim report card grade is not required.

**Demonstrate motivation and commitment**

- Honors Challenge students will complete all Honors Challenge assignments at an acceptable level as described by the teacher
- Honors Challenge students may require extra time on their studies to successfully complete the Honors Challenge assignments.
- Honors Challenge students demonstrate appropriate behavior, a positive attitude, and exemplary work habits.

**Honors Challenge(s) will ...**

- begin within the first seven weeks of the first semester and continue until the end of the school year.
- include successful completion of an Honors Project.
- be rigorous and therefore require additional time and effort from the student.

**Student:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand the criteria for Honors Challenge as outlined in this document. I am aware of the expectations and commitment necessary to be successful in Honors Challenge. Also, I am aware that if I decide not to continue with the Honors Challenge Program, I may withdraw with my parents' written consent and my grade in biology will not be affected.

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand the criteria for Honors Challenge as outlined in this document. I am aware of the expectations and commitment necessary for my son/daughter to be successful in Honors Challenge. Also, I am aware that if I support my son's/daughter's desire to not continue with the Honors Challenge Program, I will communicate my consent in writing, and his/her grade in biology will not be affected.

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_