

## REQUIREMENTS OF STUDENTS TAKING HONORS CLASSES

ALL FRESHMAN HONORS CLASSES REQUIRE DEMONSTRATED PROFICIENCY BASED ON PLACEMENT OR CHALLENGE TEST SCORES AND ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

A course designated by SPP as “Honors” (H), for example Intermediate Algebra Honors (H), requires that students commit to in-depth, intensive study of complex material, both in and out of class.

**Honors classes require students to have mastered the fundamental skills of the academic discipline.**

Students must have mastered the fundamental skills of the academic disciplines involved. Only when they have mastered the basic skills of spelling, grammar, manuscript preparation, problem-solving, calculation, research, experimentation, etc., are students prepared to enter Honors classes.

**Honors classes require students to work independently.**

Students often have to work on assignments without detailed instruction. Students are responsible for asking questions when they do not fully understand material. Students must be prepared to spend a greater amount of time on homework. In addition, they must seek extra help, if needed, and make appointments with their teachers to obtain added support.

**Honors classes require students to develop personal commitments and a strong work ethic.**

Simply attending classes and behaving acceptably is not adequate. Students must participate in discussions and activities. They must develop an active interest in the concepts they are learning, engage these concepts, and actively seek answers to questions. Students must commit to doing their best work, not the least work necessary, for a high grade.

**Honors classes require students to value learning.**

While grades are important and taken seriously, learning must be the first priority of students. Students must be able to learn from mistakes. The thinking skills students practice are abstract and often have ambiguous answers. Students must learn to cope with ambiguity and to think through complex questions. Immediate rewards for “right” answers are not always possible in the context of Honors classes.

**Honors classes require students to maintain a positive attitude.**

Students cannot resist a task because it is new or difficult. When work is “easy,” students may be practicing skills rather than learning new ones. Discomfort with new tasks is normal and students must be willing to take risks. They must do their best and strive to see the purpose of the work they are doing.

**Honors classes require students to take an interest in the subject.**

Students must be willing to analyze their work in detail and participate in lengthy discussions and projects. Each level of an accelerated or advanced placement class is preparation for the next. Students must not limit themselves to the assigned material, but continually strive to learn more by engaging in outside reading, attending lectures, doing additional research, etc.