

HONR299: HONORS MENTORS



A CLASS ON THE ART OF GETTING EVERYONE INVOLVED

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HONR 299: Honors Mentors provides gifted students a unique opportunity to develop leadership knowledge and skills through both direct experience and structured learning.

Quite often, the best way to gain knowledge is by direct experience; the best way to develop a skill is by putting it to use. Honors Mentors learn on the job, so to speak, as they actively coach teams of 7 to 8 students through a project-based learning course. In this case, that course is HONR 19901: Play. Mentors will attend HONR 19901 lectures, they will complete the assigned readings and viewings of HONR 19901, and they will coach their teams through the completion of several projects in recitation and in team meetings outside of class. I stress “coach” because mentors should act much like a coach would: they help their teams play the game to the best of their collective abilities but they do not play it for them. By sitting on the sidelines – to continue the metaphor – mentors allow their teams space for agency and growth. From this vantage point, too, mentors can better learn how teams function and how they can best help their teams develop.

STRUCTURED LEARNING

In the HONR 299 course, mentors will be provide a knowledge base for their leadership development. This knowledge includes a functional understanding of team dynamics, leadership competencies, and their own unique strengths. With this knowledge base in place, mentors will be better able to assist their teams and learn from their experience. To further facilitate learning, mentors will be provided class time for group discussions and will submit personal reflections in which they can analyze their experience and synthesize their leadership knowledge.

A final statement on workload: mentoring can be a profound experience, but it is also hard work. While mentors will be assigned a few readings for HONR 299, these have been kept to a minimum. Between the work associated with HONR 299 and 19901, mentor workloads should not exceed 4 hours per week.

MENTOR ROLES

As mentors will learn, teams work best when roles are clearly established. With that in mind, here are the four key roles that mentors will play between HONR 299 and HONR 19901: As a liaison between Honors faculty and first-year students, Mentors facilitate small group projects in recitation and thus learning outcomes related to collaboration, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary learning.

- Mentors promote identification with the Honors College community and its values through recitation teamwork and group bonding.
- Mentors coach first-year students on the skills necessary to be a successful Honors student and to be a leader within the Honors community.
- Mentors take agency over their own development through active engagement with HONR 299 and training retreats, self-directed skill management, and purposeful reflection.

MENTOR LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through the above roles, mentors will have a variety of rich experiences which will allow them opportunities for developing a variety of competencies. As with any

experiential-learning context, the achievement of specific learning outcomes is often dependent on each participant's interest, intentionality, and effort.

- **Self-Understanding and Continuous Learning:** mentors will assess their strengths and enact behavior management strategies to further cultivate their skills.
- **Communication:** in addition to exercising oral and written communication, mentors will utilize active listening and observation skills. They will also distill and synthesize group ideas, both in their reports to faculty and in their efforts to guide group discussions.
- **Systems Thinking, Planning, and Problem Solving:** mentors exercise planning skills by assisting in the development and execution of recitation projects; they also develop problem-solving skills as they help their groups navigate challenges in order to complete project goals and achieve learning outcomes. Mentors will also hone their systems thinking as they identify linkages between student competencies, project challenges, and course objectives.
- **Organizational Behavior, Teamwork, and Collaboration:** as a project facilitator, mentors witness first-hand how project-teams operate and evolve, learning along the way good practices for collaboration and overall group effectiveness.
- **Ethics, Personal Responsibility, and Cultural Intelligence:** mentors gain an understanding of the expectations, values, and personal responsibility that go with leadership opportunities. They also learn to appreciate and leverage diverse talents, backgrounds, and perspectives, both for their inherent worth and for their value to group effectiveness.

HONR 299 CALENDAR

Week 1: Team Essentials of Trust & Group Norms

- Prep work:
 - Charles Duhigg, "What Google Learned From Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team"; highlight key terms.
 - For each meeting, mentors should also read the relevant recitation and/or project
 - **Blogpost Reflection [Due by Thursday, at 8pm]**
- Purpose:

- This class will provide mentors with fundamental concepts for understanding organizational behavior and the strategies they need to cultivate strong collaboration and effective teamwork.

Mentor Training

Training will have three focus areas relevant to the HONR 299 course learning outcomes: StrengthsQuest for Self-Understanding; Diversity and Cultural Intelligence; and Authority and Ethics.

Week 2: Team Essentials of Inclusion and Commitment

- Prep Work:
 - *Students Helping Students*, 164-170.
- Purpose:
 - Like trust and group norms, inclusion and commitment are essential to teamwork and collaboration. In this regard, we will touch on group roles and intrinsic motivators that drive organizational behavior. Promoting behaviors of inclusion and commitment early in team formation will allow mentors to prepare teams for future challenges and prevent conflict.

Week 3: Effective Communication

- Prep Work
 - **Blogpost Reflection [Due by Wednesday, at 8pm]**
 - *Students Helping Students*, 98-99, 107-112.
- Purpose:
 - Mentors will reflect on the active listening and observation skills behind good **communication**. Mentors will also consider different methods for starting conversation as well as strategies for managing conversations to suit desired outcomes.

Week 4: Accountability and Feedback

- Prep Work
 - Reflection on strengths and weaknesses, using AAC&U Teamwork VALUE Rubric

- Purpose
 - In week 4, mentors will evaluate their groups to provide feedback and promote a culture of accountability. We will discuss productive feedback strategies that inspire **continuous learning**, that facilitate **self-understanding**, and that promote **personal responsibility**.

Individual Meeting

- Purpose:
 - During week 5, each mentor will meet with Dr. Moore for 20 minutes to discuss their team evaluations, their strengths as a mentor, and how they can leverage strengths to address less optimal areas of the team's or their own performance. Mentors will make a plan for cultivating a strength with tangible strategies, thus using behavior management to promote **self-understanding** and **continuous learning**.

Week 5: Project and Meeting Planning

- Prep Work:
 - **Blogpost Reflection [Due by Wednesday, at 8pm]**
 - Survey of team's strengths and weaknesses
- Purpose:
 - In anticipation of the final project, this class focuses on effective **planning** strategies for a large project and for individual meetings. In class, we will discuss how planning incorporates understanding of the **organizational behaviors** of the team as well as **problem solving** and **systems thinking**.

Week 6: Pushing vs Pulling Leadership

- Prep Work:
 - "Coaching Skills" handout
- Purpose:
 - As first-year students become more confident and adept, it is important that mentors provide them increased space for agency. By discussing the differences between pushing and pulling leadership, mentors will consider their own **personal responsibility** to student growth as they begin to engage

in more nuanced understanding of **organizational behavior**.

Week 7: Promoting Community Values

- Prep Work:
 - **Blogpost Reflection [Due by Wednesday, at 8pm]**
 - Review Honors College website and content related to the Four Pillars.
- Purpose:
 - As the course begins to draw to a close, mentors should begin to look at the larger picture. This effort will provide mentors an opportunity for **systems thinking**, as they consider the role of both the HONR 19901 and HONR 299: Mentors within the larger mission of the Honors College. It will also prepare mentors to help their students recognize the value and purpose of The Evolution of Ideas.

Week 8: Celebrate

- Prep Work
 - Complete final reflection
- However we choose to celebrate, we must make sure to make time to reflect on our experience in the course, highlighting moments of which we are proud.

ASSIGNMENTS

Four Weekly Reflections: after Recitations 1, 3, 5 and 7, mentors will write a short reflection of 300 words (approximate). The reflection should be completed by 8pm on the Thursday before our meeting, ensuring ideas are still fresh and that Dr. Moore has time to read the reflections before the next HONR 299 class. In this reflection, mentors should speak to three points:

- What was your goal this week? What strategies did you implement to achieve these goals? How did it work out?
- Describe how a concept discussed in HONR 299 played out in your teams. How did your experience help you further understand that concept?
- If you have encountered a problem, be sure to mention it as well as any strategies you are considering to solve it.

Final Reflection: by Monday, October 17th, mentors will submit a final reflection of 1000 words (approximate). The final reflection should touch on four points:

- Describe the development of your team over the 8 week course. What strategies, behaviors, or discussions promoted or hindered the team's development.
- Describe your experience with coaching up the skills of one team-member in particular. Choose the one of whose progress you are most proud.
- Discuss on how you developed as a leader over the course of the class. Be sure to incorporate the leadership competency terms used in class. Of what gains or skills are you most proud? What strategies facilitated this development?
- What aspects of your leadership do you want to hone further – choose a top three. What strategies can you employ (consider the ones you will discuss in point

GRADES AND EXPECTATIONS

Mentors in this course will be graded on a 100 point scale. Mentors receive 10 points for each weekly reflection and 30 points for the final reflection. Rubrics will be provided for these. The last 30 points will be received in full for fulfilling the basic expectations:

- attending HONR 19901 lectures, HONR 19901 recitations, and HONR 299 classes on time and fully prepared
- treating first-year students with respect
- ensuring first-year students work together inclusively and productively
- ethically and faithfully representing Dr. Moore in your role as liaison.

Mentors will not lose any of these 20 points for minor errors or oversights. If a deduction is warranted, mentors will have already been notified of the potential deduction and given an opportunity to address the error or oversight. The grading scale is as follows. Only the A and B ranges are listed because the pattern should be evident and because it seems inconceivable that an Honors Mentor would get a lower grade.

* A+ = 100 – 98 A = 100 – 92 A- = 91 – 90

* B+ = 89 – 88 B = 87 – 82 B- = 81 – 80

COURSE INFO

Meeting Times and Locations

Honors College and Residences North 1145

HONR 19901, Section 042: M/W 8:30 – 9:20

HONR 19901, Section 015: M/W 12:30 – 1:20

HONR 19901, Section 044 T/R 4:30 – 5:20

HONR 29900, section H13; F 8:30 am - 9:20 am

Email Etiquette

Please begin your email with a greeting and end it with a closing signature. Clearly state your reason for emailing in the subject heading. I will respond to all academic emails within 24 hours, if not before. I will respond to all academic emails within 24 hours, if not before. Before sending an email asking for information or clarification, consider whether that info or clarification might already have been provided via this syllabus, Blackboard, or a previous email.

POLICIES

○ Absences

- Of course, absences happen, and for a variety of reasons. Mentors are allowed 3 absences. However, because mentors have such an important role in HONR 19901 course, it is vital that absences be avoided if possible, particularly for HONR 19901 recitations. In the case of an imminent absence to HONR 19901 recitation, mentors should notify Dr. Moore as far in advance as possible.
- Outside of a letter from the Dean of Students for bereavement or extreme illness, mentors who incur more than three absence will lose a letter grade for each additional absence, in addition to points lost for failure to meet basic expectations.

○ Disabilities

- Students with disabilities must be registered with Adaptive Programs in the

Office of the Dean of Students before classroom accommodations can be provided. If you are eligible for academic accommodations because you have a documented disability that will impact your work in this class, please schedule an appointment with me to discuss your needs.

- **Diversity and Inclusion**

- All are expected to support Purdue's commitment to diversity, and thus to respect individuals of all ages, backgrounds, citizenships, abilities, educational backgrounds, ethnicities, family statuses, sexual orientations, genders & gender identities, geographical locations, languages, political affiliations, races, religions, socioeconomic statuses, and work experiences.