

PINGRY

Biology Department

Deirdre O'Mara, Tommie Hata, Luke De, Lil Torres, Lisa Fung-Kee-Fung

Honors Biology Application

Dear Biology Student,

It is time for you to make a decision about whether or not you would like to elect the honors option for Introductory Biology. The honors option is available to all students in Introductory Biology but obtaining an honors designation will require a significant amount of time and effort. In addition to an aptitude for Biology, particularly molecular biochemistry, skills such as the ability to quickly master details, the ability to refine subtle distinctions, and the ability to apply knowledge rather than just reciting it will be expected of honors candidates. Here is the description of that honors designation from the Pingry Curriculum Guide:

To earn an honor designation, students will be required to:

1. pass a test early in the year on mastery of chemistry concepts required for biology at a high level of competency;
2. possibly attend additional classes during the year to discuss the materials related to the projects.
3. submit approximately 5 projects assigned by the department that reflect deeper understanding of the material in the course;
4. maintain a B+ or higher average in the regular coursework throughout the year (if the average falls below B+, the student will have one test to return his or her average to the required level);
5. display the interest, enthusiasm, and curiosity about biology expected of an honors student—a student failing to do this will receive one written warning before being asked to leave the honors program.

Students must complete all additional requirements satisfactorily to achieve the honors designation. The projects are graded by all the biology teachers on a pass/fail basis. Students are permitted one “second chance” if a project or test is unsatisfactory; a second unsatisfactory project or test will result in the department withholding the honors designation. In addition, the original unsatisfactory projects must also be redone satisfactorily. Please note that the performance on the honors projects will not influence your biology course grade.

This is not a decision to be taken lightly, so please give it careful consideration and seek the advice of your parents, your Biology teacher, and your academic advisor before making a decision. Let me emphasize that students whose work is not of honors quality will not earn an honors designation — please read the procedures above carefully for details.

If you choose to elect the honors option, please sign and date the back of this letter, have a parent or guardian sign it as well, and return the form to your Biology teacher by October 6th.

Sincerely,

Charles W. Coe

Head of the Science Department

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Honors Biology Application **Please return by Tuesday, October 9, 2007**

I have read the requirements for choosing to attempt to achieve an honors designation in Biology and believe I have the qualifications listed in the letter. I also understand that there will be a significant amount of work involved in obtaining the honors designation, and that the additional work must be of high quality or the designation will not be awarded. I elect to attempt to achieve the honors designation:

Student Print Name

Teacher name

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date