

## Some Ideas of How Students Can Complete Honors Options

If faculty are looking for ideas in developing Honors Options in the current environment, below is a link to example on the Honors College website, as well as some examples and advice from two other faculty members more explicitly linked to our current circumstances. We are happy to collect and share more ideas.

### Examples from the HC website

<https://honorscollege.msu.edu/academics/honors-option-examples.html>

### From Lynmarie Posey, Department of Chemistry

- Large enrollment courses with a significant number of Honors Options should think about projects where students can meaningfully collaborate
  - This helps reduce the load on faculty because there are fewer final projects to review, and the students can support each other and provide peer feedback, which is valuable in and of itself. The challenge will be organizing groups remotely.
- Introductory Science Courses:
  - Have 2 or 3 students collaborate to prepare a short video (a few minutes)
    - I like videos because preparing the video requires students to develop a storyline and to think critically about what they will present. This format encourages students to express science content in their own words
    - Videos also take less time for faculty to review, and they can be a lot of fun to watch. Several years ago, I had the students in CEM 121 work in teams to prepare a 1-minute public service announcement related to the Flint water crisis as a course project. Some of the videos produced were amazing both in terms of the content and the technical skills displayed.
    - A public service announcement about a science topic that is currently in the news (Ex. PFAS contamination). For a chemistry course this could include discussion of the structure and properties of PFAS compounds, how and why they accumulate in the body, and health impacts).
    - A video that presents a course topic or concept in a creative way (Ex. Science rap, song, interview, skit, creative use of visual representations) and goes beyond repeating the presentation from class.
- Design a hands-on science activity for children, teenagers, or the general public related to some aspect of course content with specific learning goals.
- Creative writing – a short story or poem that uses concepts from course.
- Introductory Mathematics Courses.
  - Investigate a model for the spread of a disease to learn about how these models are developed, including the assumptions made, perhaps paired with a

presentation appropriate for a general audience. I don't know if there is sufficient information publicly available on the models currently being used for CoVID-19, but a model for the spread of another disease could be chosen.

- Build a project around working with some of the publicly available CoVID-19 data ([Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center](#) and NY Times). Among other things, there are data available by county for Michigan, which might lend itself to comparing what is happening in different areas of the state such as the rate which cases are increasing.
- Upper-level Science Courses:
  - Ask students to select a journal article on research related to some aspect of the course works reasonably well.
    - This is also more demanding of faculty time. A colleague and I have used this type of Honors Option with students in junior-year physical chemistry courses.
    - As a first step, ask students to select 2 or 3 papers from Science and/or Nature because articles from these journals are likely to be more accessible than those from many other journals.
      - We review the papers to make sure that the paper has some connection to course content and is a reasonable choice based on the student's background.
        - Sometimes finding an appropriate article takes a few iterations.
        - Students prepare a short presentation on the article and discuss it with the instructor near the end of the semester.

From Sharon Degraw in Lyman Briggs

These topics could take the form of a paper, case study, pamphlet, website, or podcast/video:

- What is the role of the government in public health?
  - In times of a general health crisis? In times of a pandemic?
  - Which element of government should be involved and in what ways?
    - Federal, state, county, local.
    - Supplies/medicine, policies, infrastructure, communication, coordination, research/development (see an example at “Government becomes Big Pharma” by Steph Sterling at Coronavirus Will Change the World Permanently. Here's How. POLITICO MAGAZINE 03/19/2020 07:30 PM EDT <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/03/19/coronavirus-effect-economy-life-society-analysis-covid-135579>

- Watch an episode of Pandemic and compare it to the contemporary outbreak.
- Mortality Statistics: How do the number of deaths (for coronavirus) impact public/lay perceptions.
  - Compared to flu, compared to confirmed cases, percentage of deaths within confirmed cases/lethality, in another country, countries compared to one another, under 100 v 1,000s v 10,000s, etc.
  - Utilize coronavirus stats and/or a comparison to the Spanish Flu (See <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-pandemic-h1n1.html> and “1918 Pandemic (H1N1 virus)” from CDC: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4czg3aKmfXs&feature=emb\\_rel\\_end](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4czg3aKmfXs&feature=emb_rel_end) A Webinar video commemorating 100 Years since the 1918 Flu Pandemic.)