

ROBINSON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS HONORS THESIS GUIDELINES

Goal of the Thesis:

To allow Robinson College of Business (RCB) students to work closely with a faculty member on a substantial research project in their discipline. This project should afford students the opportunity to apply knowledge gained in their major and to demonstrate an understanding of the scholarly and creative principles and writing conventions of their discipline. This also serves as a critical component of earning the Research Laureate graduation designation from the Honors College.

Eligible Students:

Honors Experience in Business students (RCB Honors College Students) who are in good standing with the Honors College are eligible to complete an honors thesis. Non-honors students who meet Honors College requirements (*i.e.*, minimum 3.3 GPA and in good standing) are also eligible. Students who do not meet these requirements may submit a petition to waive the requirements to the Faculty Associate for the Honors Experience in Business. This petition should include a letter of recommendation from the prospective faculty advisor.

Eligible Faculty:

Students interested in completing an honors thesis must identify and work closely with a RCB faculty advisor. The faculty advisor must be a full-time faculty member (tenure track or non-tenure track) in RCB.

Thesis Subject Area and Format:

Thesis projects should include traditional scholarly writing (*e.g.*, empirical research or a business case study) customary in the chosen discipline. Regardless of the exact format, all thesis projects must include a written component. Each thesis must be conducted in collaboration with the faculty advisor and must involve more effort and sophistication than would be expected from a classroom assignment. Honors theses must conform to the same formatting guidelines as graduate theses/dissertations within the respective RCB discipline. Although length may vary, it is expected that an honors thesis will be approximately 20 pages. The thesis must have a title page with spaces for the signatures of the faculty advisor and the date. If students have questions about format, they should consult their faculty advisor, the Honors College Research Program Coordinator or the Honors College Faculty Associate for Research and Thesis.

Coursework:

Students must enroll in BUSA 4880 (3 credits) for the semester they intend to complete their thesis. Students will need to set dates when drafts of the thesis or parts of the project should be completed. Students should regularly seek feedback about how they are progressing in the thesis semester. It is important that students and faculty mentors understand how student progress and final achievement are being measured. This is a graded course (*i.e.*, not pass/fail), so the faculty advisor will assign a grade for BUSA 4880. Students should be sure to discuss with their advisor what kinds of tasks/assignments will count towards the grade. Examples are an annotated bibliography, critical analysis of readings (written or oral), progress reports, an outline of the thesis, and so forth. Evaluation of these items should be determined ahead of time, so that the students and faculty mentors can assess progress throughout the semester. The grade in BUSA 4880 course will determine whether students have successfully completed their honors thesis.

Students may elect to enroll in BUSA 4870 during the semester prior to BUSA 4870, if they are actively engaged in thesis activities. The exact number of credit hours and whether to enroll in 4870 depends on

variables such as the amount of room in the student's schedule, financial constraints, and mentor requirements.

Deadlines:

Students must notify the Honors College of their intent to conduct an honors thesis by completing the online Intent to Conduct a Thesis Form (<http://honors.gsu.edu/intent-conduct-honors-thesis/>), which requires that students: 1) identify the faculty member who has agreed to supervise their project; 2) write a 200-word summary of their project; and 3) provide a tentative title for their project. Because students must register for BUSA 4880, this form is due April 1 for summer registration, August 1 for fall registration, and December 1 for spring registration.

Students who receive a passing grade must notify the Honors College that they have successfully completed their honors thesis by completing the Certification of Successful Completion Form (<http://honors.gsu.edu/certification-successful-completion-honors-thesis/>). This form is due by the last day of final exams during the semester in which the thesis is completed.

Research compliance:

Prior to beginning research, students must get approval from the GSU Institutional Review Board if their thesis uses human subjects in any way (*e.g.*, surveys, questionnaires, experiments) or approval from the GSU Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee for research involving non-human animals. Students should consult their faculty advisors about this process.

Required attendance at Honors Thesis Sessions:

Students are required to attend three 2-hour sessions led by the Honors College Thesis Team each semester that they are working on their honors thesis project. The three sessions are held at the beginning, middle and end of the semester. At the beginning of the semester, the Honors College will email students enrolled in 4870/4880 (as well as those not enrolled, but who have submitted an intent to conduct a thesis form) the dates and times of the three sessions. The last session is the Thesis Pitch, which is an oral competition event where students have 3 minutes to communicate the importance of their research. Presenting at the Thesis Pitch is voluntary, but attendance is required.

Honors College Support:

Students participating in Honors Theses are eligible to borrow a lap top computer from the Honors College for the semester, contingent on availability. Students may also apply for financial support to present at conferences and purchase supplies for their research. In addition, there are several workshops held in the Honors College each semester to provide support to thesis students. The Faculty Associate for Research and Theses and the Research Program Coordinator are available to advise students and their advisors.

Questions:

Please feel free to contact the Honors College Research Program Coordinator or the Faculty Associate for the Honors Experience in Business if you have any questions regarding any aspect of this project.

Revised October 9, 2019