

HONORS COLLEGE THESIS GUIDELINES

Goal of the thesis:

To allow students to work closely with a faculty thesis advisor on a substantial 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.

Eligible students:

Junior or senior honors students who have completed at least three upper division classes. Non-honors students that meet the 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 Honors College Research Program Coordinator. This petition should include a letter of recommendation from the prospective mentor.

Thesis subject area and format:

Thesis projects may include traditional scholarly writings (e.g., empirical research or a literature review) or a creative product (e.g., work of art, literary, musical, or dramatic composition and/or performance). Regardless of the exact format, all thesis projects must include a written component. The thesis must be conducted in collaboration with a faculty thesis 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 your college. Although length may vary, it is expected that an honors thesis will be approximately 20 pages.

Research compliance:

Prior to beginning your research, you must get approval from the GSU Institutional Review Board if your 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. Consult your advisor about this process.

Coursework:

Students must enroll in 4870 (1-3 CR) the first semester that they start their thesis and 4880 (3-6 CR) the semester they complete their thesis. These are graded courses (i.e., not pass/fail).

Your faculty thesis advisor will assign you a grade for 4870. Be sure to discuss with your advisor what kinds of tasks/assignments will count for your grade. Examples are an annotated bibliography, critical analysis of readings (written as well as oral), laboratory reports, test designs, models, quizzes, an outline of the thesis, and so forth. Evaluation of these items should be arranged so that you know your progress throughout the semester. At the end of this semester, your faculty thesis advisor will determine whether your progress is sufficient to warrant a continuation of study beyond this first phase. Your faculty thesis advisor will discuss this with you and report the decision to the Honors College office no later than 1 week before the end of classes.

When your faculty thesis advisor indicates that you are ready to proceed with the production of your thesis/project, you will be authorized by the Honors College Office to enroll in 4880. You will need to set dates when drafts of the thesis or parts of the project

semester(s). It is important that both of you understand how your progress and final achievement are being measured.

Deadlines and Process:

Proposal and Course Authorization

Before students enroll in honors coursework, they must notify the Honors College of their intent to conduct an honors thesis by completing the online Intent to Conduct a Thesis Form, 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. This form is due 1 **April** for summer registration, 1 **August** for fall registration, and 1 **December** for spring registration.

Students must notify the Honors College that they have successfully completed their honors thesis by completing the Certification of Successful Completion Form. **This form is due by the last day of classes during the semester in which the thesis is completed.**

Required attendance at Honors Thesis Sessions

Students are required to attend three 2-hr sessions led by the Honors College Thesis Team each semester that they are working on their honors thesis. 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 (and those not enrolled but 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 Thesis 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 mentors.

Questions:

Please feel free to contact the Honors College Research Program Coordinator or the Office of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships Director.

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