

HONORS THESIS GUIDELINES

(Revised Spring 2022)

What's an Honors Thesis and what's its value to me?

An Honors Thesis is a capstone experience that is based on your independent research, scholarship, or creative activity and takes the form of a written paper. While it can be a creative work, a performance, or an exhibit, it will always include a final written component. Your Honors Thesis will be evaluated by a committee of three UI faculty members whom you have chosen and worked with along this process. Not unlike graduate-level theses, your committee members will evaluate your thesis and confirm with their signatures that your Honors Thesis meets (or exceeds) the professional standards of your discipline and the expectations for advanced undergraduate effort. The length of the written thesis will vary and depend on your discipline and the project.

The value of an Honors Thesis is that it can contribute to satisfying your academic program's requirements (*) and your personal intellectual curiosity, allows you to work closely with faculty members, and offers valuable transferable skills for graduate school or your first job.

Regardless of your discipline, in the University Honors Program, an Honors Thesis must include the following elements:

- Original, independent research, scholarship, or creative activity.
- An Honors Thesis Proposal that must be approved by your thesis committee members and the Honors Program Director.
- A presentation at the bi-annual University Honors Program Research and Creative Scholarship Forum in spring or fall.
- A final written paper with interpretation and analysis, even when the main focus of the project is a creative or performance-based undertaking.
- A thesis committee of three UI faculty who supervise and evaluate the thesis and serve as your mentors.

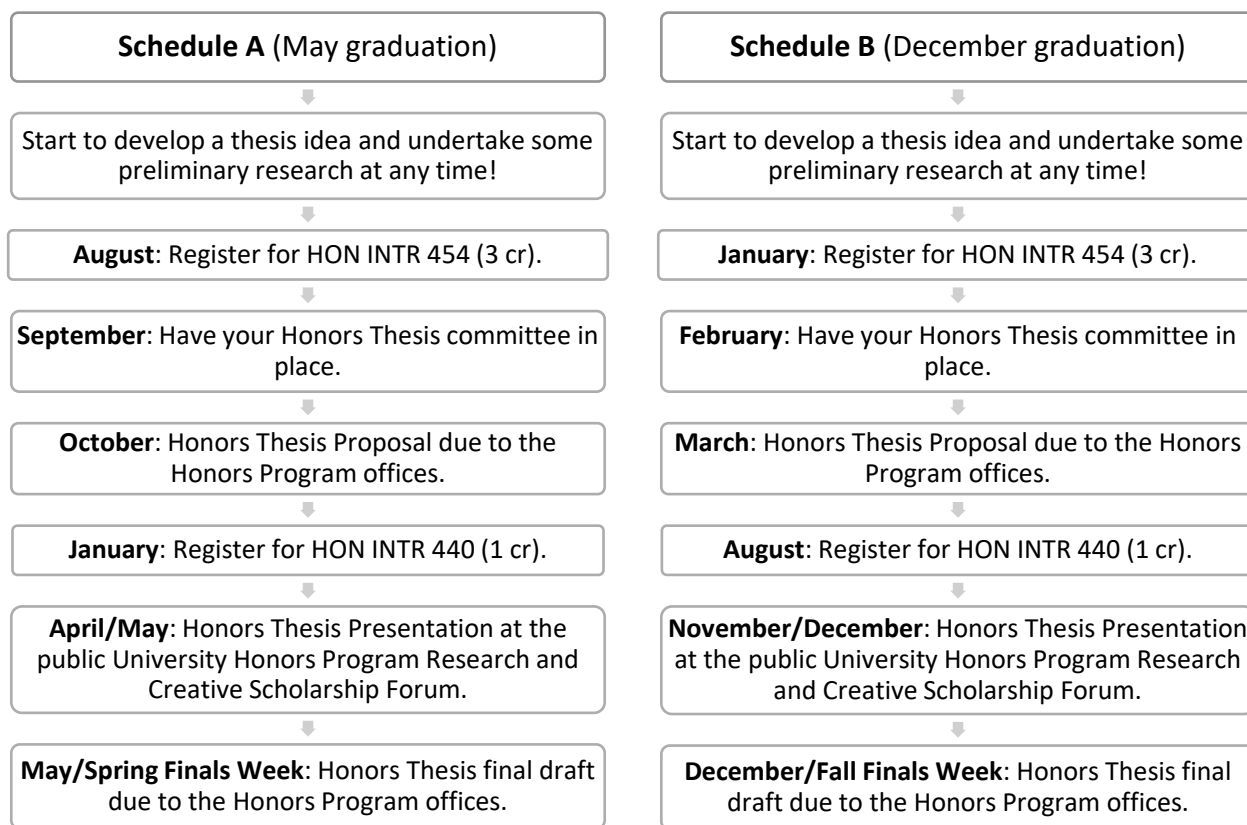
What does the Honors Thesis process look like and how long does it take?

The process is a year-long progression that begins with an idea, includes a thesis proposal, a thesis presentation at the bi-annual University Honors Program Research and Creative Scholarship Forum, and a final Honors Thesis document that you turn in to the Honors Program offices during finals week before your graduation.

The year-long process usually begins one year prior to your graduation.

Timeline-at-a-glance

The thesis timeline varies depending on when you graduate:



Schedule A: You graduate in spring semester (May)

- Take HON INTR 454 “Honors Thesis or Portfolio” in the fall semester before you graduate. During this semester, you will put together your committee, complete an Honors Thesis proposal, and start on your research/scholarship/creative project. Where appropriate, it will include a human research (or animal) protection protocol (IRB) application.
- Take HON INTR 440 “Honors Presentations” in the spring semester in which you graduate. During this semester, you will finish your research/scholarship/creative project, present it, and complete your final Honors Thesis draft that you will then submit to the Honors Program offices during finals week, i.e., just before your graduation.

Schedule B: You graduate in fall semester (December)

- Same as above but take HON INTR 454 in spring semester before your graduate.
- Same as above but take HON INTR 440 in the fall semester in which you graduate.

If your academic program has a senior thesis requirement or option, you can work with your department chair and/or faculty to make your major's senior capstone coursework honors-level work and earn honors credits along the way. You would still need to enroll in HON INTR 454 and HON INTR 440 according to the schedule above. Be advised that the two HON INTR courses are not stand-ins for your major's required courses unless your department grants you a course substitution.

(*) Example: Your major is Wildlife in the College of Natural Resources, and you are choosing to complete a senior thesis. For the senior thesis, your program requires you to take WLF 497 Senior Thesis (1-3 credits, max 6) and WLF 483 Senior Project Presentation (1 credit). With permission from the professor who teaches WLF 497 and WLF 483, those two courses could be elevated to honors-level (i.e., HON WLF 497 and HON WLF 483) by creating a separate honors section for you (you will still be in the same classes with the other students). You would thus take HON WLF 497 and HON WLF 483, **and** HON INTR 454 and HON INTR 440; **OR** WLF 497 and WLF 483, **and** HON INTR 454 and HON INTR 440 depending on your preferences.

How do I form an Honors Thesis committee and what do its members do?

Usually, there are three members on your Honors Thesis committee: your main faculty advisor and two other faculty members who should be familiar with your area of research/scholarship/creative activity. You may find someone to serve as your main faculty advisor with whom you have taken a class or who has academic interests similar to yours. The other two faculty members could be from the same disciplinary background, or not; what matters is that they can all contribute to mentoring you toward completing your thesis. Keep in mind that the three faculty committee members will be evaluating your written thesis and thesis presentation.

Your main faculty advisor should be available for regular meetings with you, to answer questions and give you guidance about the content of your thesis. Your main faculty advisor should play a key role in the revisions of your thesis and give suggestions of studies you should read to expand and broaden your understanding of the research topic. Since one of the biggest issues for students is insufficient time allocated for the back-and-forth of thesis drafts between you and your main faculty advisor, you may want to include some extra time for this when creating your timeline. **Important: Submit drafts of portions of your thesis to your main faculty advisor regularly and incorporate feedback from them on the drafts in a thorough and timely manner. The other two faculty members should also receive regular updates or drafts but must—at a minimum—receive a draft of your thesis no later than a week before your presentation.**

The names and contact information of your faculty committee members are due the first month of you taking HON INTR 454. A month or so later, they will need to approve your Honors Thesis Proposal via the Honors Thesis Proposal Form that you need to turn into the Honors Program offices along with your proposal paper. They will also attend and evaluate your presentation and give you their comments for your final Honors Thesis draft.

What goes into the Honors Thesis Proposal?

Important: You may not start your research until you have received IRB approval from the relevant university committee, if applicable. Please make sure to check if this is required [here](#). Please clearly document your exception from this process or the approval within your proposal!

Honors Thesis Proposal components (no more than 5-6 pages):

- Title page
 - Abstract (limited to 350 words)
 - Research objective, question, hypothesis or description of the research project, scholarship, or creative project
 - Preliminary data, description of the data analysis method, and/or theories employed for analysis and interpretation, or description of the project
 - Detailed calendar with specific goals and target completion dates
 - Preliminary literature/references
 - IRB (and/or animal protection) document where applicable.
1. Create a proposal paper following the outline above and submit to your main faculty advisor before the October or March deadline and receive written approval (signature) using the Honors Thesis Proposal Form (attached).
 2. Submit the paper and the form to your two other faculty members for their review (their signature is not required on the proposal form).
 3. Incorporate the feedback you receive into the proposal and submit the completed form and the proposal paper to the Honors Program offices by emailing it as an attachment to honors@uidaho.edu.

What goes into the Honors Thesis paper?

Honors Thesis components (length will vary by discipline and project):

- Title page
- Abstract (limited to 350 words)
- Acknowledgements (optional)
- Introduction, background with objectives or questions, hypothesis or project description
- Literature review
- Methods
- Results, analysis, and/or interpretation
- Discussion of results, analysis, and/or interpretation
- Conclusion
- References/works cited.

1. Complete work on your research, scholarship, or creative activity and submit drafts of your thesis to your faculty advisor and the other committee members as agreed upon and work their feedback into your thesis, making sure to cover the areas outlined above.
2. Present your thesis draft at the bi-annual University Honors Program Research and Creative Scholarship Forum. **Important:** Remember that, at the least, your three faculty committee members must receive a draft of your thesis no later than one week before your presentation for their comments etc. Your faculty committee members will be filling out an Honors Thesis Approval Form (attached) at the presentation. On the form, they will be evaluating both your draft thesis and your presentation of your draft thesis.
3. Incorporate feedback from your faculty committee members into the final draft document following your presentation.
4. Submit the final draft of your Honors Thesis to the Honors Program offices by emailing it as an attachment to honors@uidaho.edu during finals week of the semester that you are graduating. You must follow the formatting guidelines below.

Honors Thesis Formatting Guidelines

Use Times New Roman 12-point font, include all required components as outlined above and use the style manual or citation style that is appropriate in your discipline.

First page

TITLE [ALL CAPS AND DOUBLE SPACED]

By

FULL LEGAL NAME [ALL CAPS, INCLUDING FIRST, MIDDLE, AND LAST NAME]

Undergraduate Honors Thesis

University Honors Program
University of Idaho
Moscow, ID

Official Graduation Date [Example: May 2022 or December 2023]

Approved by:

Main Faculty Advisor Name

Main Faculty Advisor Department

Second page

Last name, First Name, Degree, Major, Graduation Month and Year
[Example: Sample, Sally, B.A., French, May 2022]

Main Faculty Advisor: First and last name

TITLE [ALL CAPS]

Abstract [single spaced, no more than 350 words]

Third page

TITLE [ALL CAPS]

[body of the Honors Thesis with appropriate headings and sub-heading with required components (see above)].

HONORS THESIS PROPOSAL FORM

The completed form with the main faculty advisor's required signature must be submitted to the University Honors Program along with the proposal document for review and approval by the program director.

Email the proposal paper and this form as an attachment to honors@uidaho.edu.

Student

Student Name:

Student's Academic Major(s):

Honors Thesis Title:

Anticipated semester of honors thesis presentation (example: spring 2022): _____

Anticipated graduation date (example: May 2022): _____

Honors Thesis Committee Members

Main Faculty Advisor's Name:

Main Faculty Advisor's Department:

Main Faculty Advisor's Signature and date (indicating willingness to mentor the student and approval of the proposal):

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Second Faculty Member's Name (no signature required):

Second Faculty Member's Department:

Third Faculty Member's Name (no signature required):

Third Faculty Member's Department:

University Honors Program

UHP Director's Signature: _____ Date: _____

HONORS THESIS APPROVAL FORM

To be completed at the Honors Thesis Presentation by the members of the faculty committee who are present.

Student Information:

Student Name: _____

Date of Honors Thesis Presentation: _____

Honors Thesis Title: _____

Honors Thesis evaluation based on previous drafts of the thesis and today's presentation:

Main Faculty Advisor's Name: _____

Department: _____

- Exceeds professional expectations in the discipline.
- Meets professional expectations in the discipline.
- Does not meet professional expectations in the discipline.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Second Faculty Member's Name: _____

Department: _____

- Exceeds professional expectations in the discipline.
- Meets professional expectations in the discipline.
- Does not meet professional expectations in the discipline.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Third Faculty Member's Name: _____

Department: _____

- Exceeds professional expectations in the discipline.
- Meets professional expectations in the discipline.
- Does not meet professional expectations in the discipline.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

UHP Director's Signature: _____ Date: _____