

Guidelines for honors projects May 2010

Description

An honors project provides a special opportunity for students who have done exceptional work in a particular field to engage in an in-depth study under the direction of a professor. Students are eligible if they have passed their Mid-course Assessment with a cumulative grade point average of 3.60, and a 3.80 average in the proposed area of study. Students may choose to work with a particular professor in the biblical, historical-doctrinal, or practical theology area. The program consists of guided study of two long semesters for a total of 6 credit hours during the final year.

Ordinarily, the final project will be approximately 40-50 pages in length, including footnotes and bibliography. A project that receives the honors designation will:

- a) Clearly articulate a research question and conduct focused independent research in that area;
- b) Analyze the results of the research;
- c) Demonstrate the student's capacity for independent critical reflection;
- d) Show excellence in scholarship and writing that exceeds a one-semester independent study in the M.Div. program.

If the area determines that the project should receive honors, then the advisor will grant an A to the student for each semester of study. If the area determines that the project should not receive honors, then the advisor, with the input from the area, will determine the final grade for each semester of study.

Timeline

March (middler year): The Academic Affairs Office sends letters of invitation to students who are eligible to propose honors projects, and the coordinator organizes an informational meeting for interested students. This meeting will include current students who are completing honors projects, faculty advisors, area representatives, and the Dean of the Faculty. At this meeting the timeline and expectations will be clarified.

April: Each interested student develops a proposal with the expected advisor and presents it to the appropriate area for approval. The area then submits the names of students approved for honors projects to Academic Affairs.

Early May: The Academic Affairs Office sends written communication to students and advisors, clarifying the process and the expectations.

May-August: If possible, students should begin research for the project.

Early September: The Academic Affairs office sends a reminder notice to students and advisors, reiterating the timeline and expectations.

September 15: The student submits a plan of study to the advisor, including regular planned meeting times and a schedule for research and writing. The student and advisor are encouraged to meet every 2 weeks during term.

October: Begin writing

By November 15: meet again with the area for interim report and determine the student's readiness to register for continuing honors research in the spring term

January: Focused time for writing during the break

March 1: First full draft is due to the advisor

March 15: Comments returned to student for revision

April 1: The revised draft is due to the area for review

By April 15: The area meets for final review of the project and determination of honors. The results should be reported immediately to Academic Affairs for inclusion in the commencement bulletin.