

University Honors Program

Thesis Adviser's Guide to the Senior Honors Thesis

HONR 499 The Senior Honors Thesis

The Senior Honors Thesis is the quintessential capstone experience that allows students to explore academic areas of their most passionate interests, engage in the process of discovery, and make a creative contribution in their areas of interest and expertise.

The Senior Honors Thesis (HONR 499) is a 3-credit independent project that the student creates and completes with your guidance. Students can register for HONR 499 after successfully completing HONR 399, the Honors Pre-Thesis course. HONR 499 is supervised by at least two faculty members (a faculty thesis adviser and a faculty committee member).

Your responsibilities as faculty thesis adviser:

- Advises and mentors the Honors student throughout the Senior Honors Thesis experience.
- Guides the student in refining the topic, developing approaches to the creative activity, and providing key sources of information.
- Works with the student to jointly select a committee member.
- Reviews and makes recommendations on the student's thesis drafts.
- Mentors the student for the oral presentation.
- Assigns a grade based on the quality of the student's research/creative activity, written work, and oral presentation

Students must complete the Honors Formal Thesis Proposal. You must sign it for submission to the Honors office no later than the end of the third week of the HONR 499 semester.

Senior Honors Theses can be created in a variety of formats, and all include a formal written component and a formal oral presentation. If the main product of the Senior Honors Thesis is not in written form, a formal reflection paper must also be submitted which is described in Appendix II in the Honors Thesis Guide.

All Senior Honors Theses must include a written and oral communication requirement. The writing component varies by the type of Senior Honors Thesis (e.g., research, design project, artistry, and/or scholarship). The length and style conform to the accepted norms in these

areas. The oral communication component consists of a minimum 15-20 minute extemporaneous oral presentation by the Honors Student by a question and answer session with the committee and guests. Poster presentations at university, regional, or national professional meetings meet the oral presentation requirement. This must be completed by the 15th week.

If the Senior Honors Thesis that you are mentoring includes laboratory or fieldwork and/or research including human or animal subjects, you should contact the Research Integrity and Compliance Review office (<https://www.research.colostate.edu/ricro/>) for compliance information.

Students schedule times to meet with you throughout the semester to discuss, research, and review drafts of the thesis.

A penultimate draft should be given to you and the other committee member(s) by student by the 13th week of the semester.

Students are responsible for completing the formal oral presentation by the 15th week and submitting a final electronic copy of the thesis, which incorporates final recommendations, to honors@colostate.edu by the end of finals week. If this is not done an "I" grade will be recorded until the thesis is completed.

The faculty adviser completes and signs the evaluation form for the student's formal oral presentation, and may utilize input from the committee member(s).

The evaluation form, signed by you and the committee member(s), must be submitted to the honors@colostate.edu by the last day of finals week.

As a faculty thesis adviser, you will determine the thesis grade based on the quality of the student's work, the written component, and the oral presentation.

Adviser Requirements

To be a faculty thesis adviser, you must:

- Be employed at Colorado State University as a full-time, part-time, or transitional faculty member or Professor *emeritus*. Non-tenure track faculty must have a continuing contract or appointment in an academic department.
- Have attained a doctorate (Ph.D.) or the terminal degree in their field.
- Be on campus during the semester in which the student is completing the Thesis (e.g., not on sabbatical leave).
- Be familiar with the requirements documented in the Senior Thesis Guide.

Exceptions to these requirements must be approved by the department chair and the Honors Program Director. The procedure for making the request is explained in the Senior Honors Thesis Guide.

Final Thoughts

The Senior Honors Thesis is ultimately an independent research or other creative activity developed and completed by the student with your assistance. It is expected that you will be available for the student to help with formulating ideas, editing drafts of the project, and preparing for the formal presentation. The hope is that both you and your student will find the completion of the Thesis to be an enjoyable and enriching process.

The Honors Thesis shows senior-level scholarship and writing. The oral presentation experience is much more of a celebration and showcase than a defense of the student's work.

Upon completion of the Senior Honors Thesis and the submission of the grade, the faculty thesis adviser and/or the department will receive a stipend from the Honors Program if requested in the cover page of the Honors Formal Proposal.