HONORS THESIS HANDBOOK

For all Honors students who intend to graduate with Highest Honors

Revised October 2018
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Introduction

This Handbook is for all Honors students, including HAL majors, who intend to graduate with Highest Honors. In order to do so, you must complete a thesis by taking HONS 3300 and 4300. This Handbook is designed to assist you throughout the preparation and completion of your thesis. It contains pertinent information that will allow you to move through the process smoothly and help you produce a thesis that meets Honors College expectations and requirements. Using this information in the researching, writing, and formatting of your thesis will ensure that the finished product reflects your commitment and hard work.

The Honors College faculty and staff are dedicated to assisting you as you make the commitment to fulfill all Highest Honors criteria. Please do not hesitate to come to us with questions about any part of this Handbook, the thesis itself, or the thesis completion process.

The Honors Thesis

The Honors Thesis is meant to be the culmination of a student’s Honors experience. It gives the student an opportunity to conduct original research while being guided by a faculty member who serves as the student’s Thesis Director. The Thesis is required for graduation “with Highest Honors” from the Honors College (in addition to accumulating thirty total Honors credit hours). While Theses are typically written documents, other formats may also be accepted (e.g., recital or exhibition) with approval from the HONS 3300 Instructor and if compliant with the original research requirement (see below). Students may enroll in two semesters of research coursework (at three credits per semester) while completing the Thesis.* These credits will count towards the thirty Honors credit hours needed for graduating with Highest Honors.

*Students who have already obtained thirty Honors credit hours at the start of Thesis work are not required to enroll in research hours, although some students may find it advantageous to enroll in the research hours, regardless.

Student Responsibilities

Prior to submitting an application to do an Honors Thesis, a student should meet with the HONS 3300 Instructor for a consultation. During this consultation students will receive information about the Honors Thesis process and a copy of the application. Only students “in good standing” with the Honors College are eligible to apply and an approved application must be on file in the Honors College BEFORE enrollment in Thesis research hours.

Student responsibilities related to the Honors Thesis include:

- **Selecting a topic for the Thesis:** Due to the significant time and effort involved with an Honors Thesis, it is highly recommended that you chose a topic in which you have a strong interest. This topic need not be in the area of your major, but it should be a topic for which you enjoy reading about and research—a topic you can see yourself still being passionate about nine months to a year after starting Thesis work. Your Thesis topic can certainly be in your major field of study but the research and finished product should NOT be viewed similarly to a semester term paper or a journal article. This is a much more substantial work.
• **Selecting a Thesis Director (and Thesis Second Reader):** You must select a faculty member to serve as your Thesis Director. This individual must be a member of the TTU or TTU Health Sciences Center teaching faculty and must normally be on the Lubbock campus for the duration of your Thesis work. The Thesis Director will help guide you through the Thesis process to include topic formation, research, writing, and revision. The student is also encouraged to select a faculty member to serve as the Thesis Second Reader. This person will be a “second reader” of your Thesis drafts and will advise you if your Thesis Director is unavailable. With an interdisciplinary Thesis, the Second Reader may provide additional content expertise which the Director may not have. However, the Director should be the primary overseer of the Thesis. You must select the Thesis Director and Second Reader before applying. It is critical to maintain contact with your Director throughout the Thesis process. Upon completing the Thesis, your Director will sign the title page, indicating his or her approval of the work. You are also welcome to have the Second Reader sign the title page as well. From there, the Thesis will be submitted to the Honors College for final review by the HONS 3300 Instructor and the Honors Dean who have the final say on whether the Thesis is acceptable and has met the Honors College’s standard of graduating with Highest Honors.

• **Conducting responsible research:** Guidelines for responsible research must be followed (e.g., using reputable sources, citing all sources in a professional format, and never plagiarizing). All of your citations will be checked. No Thesis containing plagiarized content will receive credit and the student will not graduate with Highest Honors. Students conducting research with human subjects must receive approval through TTU’s Institutional Review Board. The following website has more details: [http://www.ors.ttu.edu/Newors/newhome/Policies_Procedures/Human_Subjects_TTU_policies.html](http://www.ors.ttu.edu/Newors/newhome/Policies_Procedures/Human_Subjects_TTU_policies.html). The Honors College will not accept an Honors Thesis application for a Thesis involving human subjects without proof of approval from TTU’s Institutional Review Board.

• **Ensuring the Thesis contains original research:** The Thesis must contain original research from you. That is, you are expected to produce some new insights on the topic investigated. For example, if the research is a laboratory investigation, it should do more than simply reproduce someone else’s experience; it should go beyond previous work to seek to answer new questions. The same guidelines apply to other types of research such as field or historical investigations, surveys, evaluations of literature in a particular area of study, or artistic productions (which should offer original interpretations in the chosen medium of expression). Your Thesis Director can help guide you away from work that has already been done and in the direction of work that has yet to be done.

• **Making the Thesis accessible to multiple audiences:** Technical Theses should contain sufficient contextual information so that a non-specialist reader can have a limited understanding of the content and significance of the work. Students often use research they have completed for a scholarly journal article as the foundation for their Theses. Those students wishing to do this must build on the journal article content, as the Honors Thesis must contain, among other elements, significant contextual information which would likely not be included in the journal article submission and should be a more substantial work.
• **Producing a work worth of six Honors College and TTU credit hours:** Students often ask, “How long does my Thesis need to be?” The answer will be different for each student and is dependent upon the discipline from which the student is research and the nature of that particular Thesis. While quality is more important than quantity, the Thesis should thoroughly cover your topic and contain all of the required elements of a solid work as set forth by the Honors College. This is information that will be provided to you at the beginning of the Thesis process. What should be consistent among all students, regardless of discipline, is the amount of time and effort that each student puts into the completion of their Honors Thesis. **Keep in mind that an Honors Thesis is the outcome of two, three-credit, upper-level Honors courses and the work should reflect that.**

• **Turning in the Thesis:** A final hard copy of your Honors Thesis (with the title page signed by the Thesis Director) should be submitted to the Honors College by the date determined by the HONS 3300/4300 Instructor. The Thesis will be submitted to the Honors Dean for final approval. If the Thesis is not approved by the Dean, it will be returned to you. Students will have the option and opportunity of revising the Thesis and resubmitting it for approval. Theses approved by the Honors College can be stored electronically through the University Library.

**Faculty Responsibilities**

The Thesis Director is responsible for advising the student about the content, structure, and style of the Thesis, as well as editing and reviewing the project.* The Director should discuss in depth the idea of original research and how this component of the student’s Thesis will be developed. When the student finishes the Thesis, the Director is responsible for signing the title page which indicates his or her approval of the work. If the student has enrolled in research hours, the Thesis Director will indicate a grade for the student for those hours. The student will submit a final hard copy of the Thesis with the Director-signed title page to the Honors College by the appropriate deadline. The Dean of the Honors College will evaluate the Thesis and provide a final signature, if approved. For more information on the Director’s responsibilities, consult the Honor College’s “Guide for Honors Thesis Directors.”

*Though we do not expect the Honors Thesis to require as much time or effort as the Master’s Thesis or project in the faculty advisor’s discipline, the Master’s Thesis provides an appropriate model for the subject, content, and structure of the Honors Thesis.*

**Timetable for the Honors Thesis**

As part of the application, students are required to submit a detailed timetable for their Theses. The following timeline is offered as a guide. The Honors College requires a minimum of three dates to be listed, although we encourage students to include more dates to ensure steady progress on the work.

The Honors Thesis is designed to be an eighteen-month process. In the first segment of the schedule (which can be a semester or a summer), the student is to contemplate and choose a topic, find a Thesis Director, and begin doing preliminary research. The last two semesters of work will have specific deadlines as set by the HONS 3300 Instructor. For the first required deadline, the student must submit a work-in-progress and a Progress Report signed by his or her Thesis Director. For the second required deadline, the student must submit a second work-in-progress. By this point, the work should closely resemble what the final product will look like. For the final
required deadline, the student should submit one final hard copy of the thesis, with a title page signed by the student’s Thesis Director.

**Thesis Length**
An Honors thesis in a **science** field will usually be between 25 and 45 pages in length. An Honors thesis in a **humanities** field will usually be between 65 and 85 pages in length.

**Suggested Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
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| • Read information about Thesis on the Honors College website  
• Make an appointment for a consultation with the HONS 3300 Instructor | Anytime but *at least* by the 2nd semester of junior year |
| • Brainstorm topic ideas  
• Approach faculty members about potentially serving as Thesis Director and Second Reader (optional) | 2nd semester of junior year |
| • Complete Thesis Application and return to the Honors College for approval  
• If approved, schedule an appointment with the HONS 3300 Instructor and selected Thesis Director to discuss Thesis and Honors College expectations  
• If approved, enroll in Thesis research hours for following semester (consult Advisor)  
• Begin preliminary research and prepare outside of Thesis | 2nd semester of junior year |
| • Submit first work-in-progress and signed Progress Report to the HONS 3300 Instructor  
• Enroll in second semester of Thesis research hours (consult Advisor) | Last class day for 1st Thesis semester |
| • Complete “Intent to Graduate” form with the Honors College; on form, remember to indicate plans to graduate “with Highest Honors” | Semester *prior* to graduation |
| • Submit second work-in-progress and signed Progress Report to the HONS 3300 Instructor | 2nd Thesis semester  
• October 1st (if finishing in fall)  
• March 1st (if finishing in spring) |
| • Turn in one (1) final hard copy of Thesis with Thesis Director signature on title page | 2nd Thesis semester  
• Nov 1st (if finishing in fall)  
• April 1st (if finishing in spring) |
Honors Thesis Program Contact Information

HONS 3300/4300 Instructor

Prof. Kurt Caswell
McClellan 201A
kurt.caswell@ttu.edu

Honors Advisors

Chad M. Cain
(Honors Arts & Letters majors)
McClellan Hall 102A
806-834-8972
chad.cain@ttu.edu

Abel Rios
(all other Honors students)
McClellan Hall 102
806-834-1191
abel.rios@ttu.edu

Honors College Main Office

McClellan Hall 103
806-742-1828
M - F / 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
How to Select Your Honors Thesis Director

Your selection of a faculty mentor **Thesis Director** for your Honors thesis is extremely important, so make the invitation to work with you thoughtful and informed. Your Thesis Director will be the person who directs your Honors Thesis and who works one-on-one with you throughout the research and writing phases of your project. This faculty member will advise and direct your project; he or she will also be your tutor and mentor. The Thesis Director should be someone who is dedicated to helping you with your Thesis research as well as someone who dedicated to the **writing process** that goes along with the Thesis.

**When to Begin Considering a Thesis Director**

You will want to start thinking about and visting with potential thesis directors during your junior year or at least one year prior to your actual work on the thesis. Even earlier than your junior year, you may want to plan coursework or seminar selections with specific faculty members who might later function as your Honors Thesis **Director**.

Consider participating in the Undergraduate Research Fellowship (URF) program which is an excellent opportunity to foster a working relationship with a faculty member who can later serve as the advisor of your Honors Thesis.

Talk to the Honors College Advisors and other students in the college about faculty who will make effective thesis directors.

Make appointments with prospective faculty mentors/advisors and visit with them about your ideas and their own research and academic schedules to find out whether they are in a good place to supervise your Honors Thesis. You want to determine whether this faculty member is a good match for you but remember, the Thesis Director is a volunteer.

Begin a folder or packet of your Honors Thesis preparations right now with working ideas and notes from conversations. Think about the schedule of future courses that will provide you with the background you need for your thesis and/or that will be taught by faculty that you think might be a good choice for a Thesis Director. Include in your folder the course, seminar, or URF papers that you believe might be useful to your Thesis project. Include all Honors Thesis forms and handouts.

Start your homework on this important selection process early.

**What to Look for in an Effective Thesis Director**

You want to work with a faculty mentor/advisor who is good for you in a number of ways:

- Your Thesis Director should have a comfortable, working relationship with you, and preferably, this relationship has been established by your having taken coursework or seminars with the faculty member and/or worked with the faculty member in undergraduate research.

- Your Thesis Director should be knowledgeable in the field (content, methodology, theory, specialization) of your thesis project and preferably engaged in research and scholarship that is connected in some ways to your own work.
• Your Thesis Director should have the time, energy, and commitment to work on an Honors Thesis with you as you learn how the process of a large, complex project for the first time; preferably a faculty member with experience in directing a Master’s thesis or a Ph.D. dissertation.

• Your Thesis Director should be accessible; when faculty and students try to work across distances, the quality of the project is compromised.

• Your Thesis Director should be someone who reads and responds promptly to your work in progress.

• Your Thesis Director should be open-minded and willing to foster your ideas to allow you to pursue the avenue of investigation you find engaging.

• Your Thesis Director should be able to help you achieve your career goals (graduate schools, conferences or professional meetings in the field, networking with professionals in the field, internship or employment avenues, publication possibilities). This faculty member will be a person you will draw upon for letters of recommendation and professional references.

• Your Thesis Director will need to partner with the Honors College to achieve optimum scholarship experience for you and to meet the thesis requirements, expectations, workshops, and deadlines established by the Honors College. Early in the process schedule a meeting with your mentor, yourself, and the HONS 3300 Instructor to go over procedures and expectations.

**Having Difficulty Making a Selection?**

If you are finding it difficult to find a Thesis Director who works in your field of interest, is accessible and available, and/or wishes to work with you, then speak to the HONS 3300 Instructor about facilitating discussions and meetings with potential faculty members.
How to Write an Honors Thesis Proposal

What is a Thesis Proposal?

Your Thesis proposal is directed at a limited audience: you, your Thesis Mentor, and the Honors College HONS 3300 Instructor. Your proposal is a document that gives this audience a road map that identifies your topic, explains the nature of your research, presents the project’s working argument and major points of development, names the project’s analytical approaches, research methodology, and resources, and outlines a plan of completion. Your proposal is a fluid, flexible, foundational document, capable of handling changes and new avenues of investigation or resources that might occur during the research and writing phases of the Thesis project itself.

In writing a proposal, you are narrowing the scope of your study and defining the preliminary argument of your project. You give yourself organization and structure. You sketch handy points of development and resources. You create a timetable and deadlines that help to preserve the process-oriented work necessary on a project of this length and complexity.

Your Thesis proposal reflects your pre-writing thinking, reading, and discussing of your topic and thesis project. Your proposal reflects thinking, refining, and studying on paper. Your proposal reflects your pre-existing knowledge of the project’s topic and identifies what experiential knowledge you bring to it. At this stage in the project, you may ask questions in your proposal that you cannot yet answer. You may be able to identify avenues of investigation for which you do know the outcome.

A well planned, structured, and written Thesis proposal gets you off to a strong start on your project and will serve you well during the entire process of writing your Honors Thesis.

Key Points to Include in Your Proposal

- Working (though not necessarily final) title of the project
- Working argument (thesis or hypothesis) of the project
- Why your project matters (it’s importance to the field in which it contributes)
- Knowledge and skills or credentials you bring as an emerging expert on this project; credentials your faculty mentor will bring to your project
- Analytical approaches and/or research methodologies
- Ways in which your project is accessible to experts in the field as well as interested, informed, and educated lay readers
- Preliminary list of resources or bibliography
- Schedule of activities leading to the completion of the project

Revising Your Thesis Proposal

Because this document is so vital to the success of your entire Honors Thesis, be willing to revise it several times. Following your initial draft, share and discuss it with your Thesis
Director, Thesis Second Reader, and/or the HONS 3300 Instructor. These conversations often enable you to clarify and specify elements of your proposal. The collective thinking about your Thesis project on the front end is extremely helpful in making it manageable.

The revision process enables you to mold, improve, and sharpen the project and to assist the actual research and writing stages of the process. Be willing to receive feedback from multiple reviewers and revise thoughtfully, based on those suggestions and comments.

**Helpful Tips at the Proposal Stage of Your Honors Thesis**

- The more you discuss your project at the proposal stage, the better your proposal.
- The more reading you do about your project area at the proposal stage, the better your proposal.
- Keep careful notes and full formal citations. The more correct and complete you make your bibliographic notes and citations of materials you read, the better your proposal.
- Annotate everything you read, making sure to include page numbers for summaries, paraphrases, and direct quotations. Begin your working Bibliography or Works Cited list now.

**Tips for Your Overall Project**

- Begin thinking of your project in divisions or sections, so that you can begin to plug in ideas and materials to those divisions—refer to the Honors Thesis Format Guidelines to see how the project will take shape at the end. This is the stage at which you generate a working organization for the project.
- Begin the process of describing your analytical or theoretical approaches as well as your research methodologies. Begin to identify those analytical perspectives and methodological procedures that converge and diverge from those you intend to use in your project.
- Describe your own knowledge base about your project, coursework, lab work, research projects, experiential knowledge that you can bring to bear upon this project. Are there parts of previously generated scholarship that could be revised and integrated in this project?
- Identify and define your audience (expert and lay) so that you can begin to anticipate what information they may need packaged differently so your research will be accessible to them.
- Keep a “brainstorming” section of your project so that you can write down ideas when they come to you or when you are having discussions about your project with others. If you don’t write down these ideas at the time they occur, you will not retain them.
- Set reasonable but weekly expectations for yourself in your timetable toward the project’s completion. Give yourself ample time for every phase of the project. Be aware that every stage of a large project of this kind takes more time than you think it will. Avoid jamming up everything at the end by working every week on your
project and by writing and revising as you progress through the project’s stages. The researching and writing aspects are recurring and constant.

- Share work in progress with your faculty mentors as you generate it. Faculty are accustomed to reading and responding to work in progress. If you run into an obstacle, let your faculty mentors help you with it right away.

- Meet regularly with your faculty mentors. Build meetings into your schedule. Each meeting should have a specific purpose. Before you meet with your faculty mentors, send them work in progress so that they will have time to review what you are working on and make your conversation as specific and as helpful as possible.

- Be willing to discard some work that you generate in the early stages of your project. Some resource materials will simply not be relevant to the final manifestation of the project. Some ideas will not be useful to the direction and focus your final project takes.

- Knowing when to discard materials and when to integrate materials is part of the thesis writing process.
Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) and Scholarship

No research can be conducted prior to receiving IRB/IACUC approval for those projects that require it.

The following information applies primarily to STEM majors; humanities research is generally exempt from these requirements. If you have questions about whether or not your research project requires additional training or institutional approval, talk to your HONS 3300 instructor and your thesis director.

As part of Texas Tech’s commitment to integrity, ethics, and safety, Honors Thesis candidates will be required to attend training in the Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship in your discipline and in your specific area of research. This may include specialized training or attendance at workshops specific to the research or general lab safety. If your faculty director’s research is funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), then you may be required to attend additional training to satisfy NSF requirements.

It will also be necessary to gain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval if using human subjects or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval if working with animals. A copy of the IRB/IACUC approval form must be included in the Honors thesis as an appendix. For more information about IRB, please go to the Human Research Protection Program website, www.depts.ttu.edu/vpr/irb/index.php. For additional information and instructions about IACUC please go their website at www.depts.ttu.edu/iacuc.

It is imperative that you discuss IRB/IACUC approval with your faculty director early in the thesis process even if you do not believe you need the approval. Securing this approval can take some time, so it is best to start the application process early. Moreover, it may be necessary to have this approval if you want to use the research in the future, particularly as part of a graduate project or publication. Texas Tech University and the Honors College are interested in protecting students, so we err on the side of caution in these matters.

If you are continuing research already in progress, it may be possible to utilize an IRB or IACUC approval that is already in place.
Procedures for Lab Safety

1. Complete the online Safety Awareness course from Texas Tech University Environmental Health and Safety department (http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ehs/Web/).

2. Complete the online Lab Safety course from Texas Tech University Environmental Health and Safety department (http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ehs/Web/TrainModDesc.aspx).

3. Complete any additional online courses that are relevant to your research from Texas Tech University Environmental Health and Safety department.

Procedures for Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship

It is the mission of the Honors College to provide a safe space for Honors Thesis students to report and discuss their concerns regarding the safe and ethical conduct of research and scholarship. If you have a concern, please do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the Honors Thesis Instructor, the Undergraduate Research Coordinator, or the Associate Dean of the Honors College. We strive to provide a safe, secure environment where integrity and ethics are the cornerstones of research and scholarship.

Procedures for Honors thesis students to report unsafe practices or misconduct in research and scholarship:

1. Take written notes of the incidents, including dates, times, and the exact circumstances of the misconduct or unsafe procedures.
2. Bring this information to your Honors Thesis Instructor.
3. If necessary, schedule a meeting with your Honors Thesis Instructor to discuss your concerns.
4. Know that the Honors Thesis Instructor will protect your confidentiality and will handle the reporting of the alleged misconduct to the appropriate University authorities.
Honors Thesis Formatting Guidelines

Careful thesis manuscript preparation is important because it reflects the quality of your work, which can be accessed electronically by the public through the library’s website (Honors theses can be digitized with access available through the TTU University Library). You must be consistent with citations in the presentation of your scholarship. Other readers in your field, as well as anyone interested in your project, must be able to access what you bring to the scholarly conversation, and be able to access information that exists about your subject matter. So make your manuscript reader-friendly, regularized and appealing.

Documentation Style

Honors theses should be written according to the citation and style format appropriate to each academic field. If you are writing your thesis to submit for publication by a specific journal, you should follow that journal’s guidelines and provide them to both your thesis director and your HONS 3300/4300 instructor.

Honors thesis students may not use online bibliography tools like BibMe, EasyBib, etc., to format their citations. These sites are unreliable and inevitably result in errors.

For style and documentation, **students should consistently follow the most recent edition of the manual of style accepted in their discipline.** Some of the most commonly used style manuals are:

*The St. Martin’s Handbook* (highly recommended)
*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*
*Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA)
*Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual*
*The Chicago Manual of Style*

Additionally, Purdue University’s Online Writing Center (OWL) is a great resource with quick links to most commonly used documentation styles: [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/)

Many of you will be writing Honors theses that are meant to mirror scientific journal articles. In these cases, the Honors College asks that you include a brief Introduction and Conclusion written for and accessible to the lay audience. Your Honors Thesis Instructor will work closely with you on how to write these sections.

Some of you will be writing your Honors thesis for submission to specific journals in your fields. In these cases, you need to furnish your Honors thesis instructor with the formatting instructions and guidelines provided by that journal. Most journals have sections detailing guidelines for potential authors on their websites.

If you are unsure of the documentation style that you should be using for your Honors thesis, speak with your thesis director to determine which style is appropriate to your field and for
your thesis project. You may also discuss documentation style with your Honors thesis instructor at any time during the process.

Note: It is important to determine the proper documentation style at the outset of your thesis project, and you should use it in every draft. Do not wait until the final draft to “fix” your citations. Format your citations properly from the beginning. Additionally, it is advisable to “overcite” in early drafts, meaning that you should cite every single bit of information that you think needs a citation. It is much easier to include this information in early drafts than it is to look it up later. Your HONS 4300 Instructor will help you remove superfluous and repetitive citations in later drafts.

**Manuscript Organization**

Broadly speaking, there are two different types of organization for Honors theses: one for theses in the humanities, and one for those in the sciences. Please use the descriptions below as general organizational guidelines; as you draft your thesis, your organization is likely to change in response to feedback from your Thesis Director and your HONS 3300/4300 Instructor.

**Thesis in the Sciences:**

- Title Page
- Contents
- Abstract
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- List of Illustrations/List of Tables/List of Figures (when needed)
- Introduction
  - Definition and background of the thesis topic, statement of research question and argument
- Literature Review
  - Work-by-work review of every relevant scholarly article, book, and/or unpublished study
- Methods
  - Detailed, chronological description of every method and instrument employed in this study
- Results
  - Detailed analysis of the results of this study
- Discussion
  - Detailed discussion of the results, including explanations for each result, a detailed comparison of your results to those of other relevant studies, and a discussion of the limitations of your study
- Conclusions
  - Reiteration of your argument and the significance of this study to the field
  - Suggestions for future research
- Appendices
  - As you draft your thesis, you will discuss appropriate appendices with your Honors Thesis Instructor; these generally include things like consent forms, large
data charts or graphs, and photographs or images that were too large or awkward to go in the text of your thesis.

- Works Cited
  - Includes all works cited

**Theses in the Humanities:**
- Title Page
- Contents
- Abstract
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- List of Illustrations/List of Tables/List of Figures (when needed)
- Introduction
  - Introduction of the topic of the thesis project and its background (how and why you are writing on this topic, etc.)
  - Thesis (statement of position, arguments, hypothesis)
  - Statement of research methodology (when needed)
  - Statement and definition of relevant theoretical paradigms
  - Literature Review (situate your work within the context of existing published scholarship—this section might be embedded in the body of your thesis in the final draft, but it is advisable to write it first as a separate section)
- Body of Thesis
  - Analytical discussion
    - Presentation and discussion of results (if you conducted a specific study or experiment)
    - Lengthy discussion of integration of your secondary research (the existing scholarly works that you used to formulate your ideas) and your primary research (the additional research you did to build your argument, which includes things like archival research, media and online sources, interviews, etc.)
    - Comparison of your results to those of other relevant works in the field
- Conclusion
  - Reiteration of your argument and the significance of this study to the field
  - Implications of study, with a discussion of possible limitations and suggestions for further research
- Appendices (optional)
- Works Cited

**Formatting:**

Your Honors theses should conform to the TTU Graduate School’s formatting guidelines, available here: [https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/docs/format/FormattingManual.pdf](https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/docs/format/FormattingManual.pdf)
The exception to this rule is your title page, which will look slightly different from the template provided in the Graduate School’s guidelines. See “Sample Pages” for the Honors thesis title page template.

- **IMPORTANT:** When submitting the penultimate electronic copy (MS Word) of your finished, formatted thesis to the Thesis Coordinator, you will include the title page without signatures. The Library Archive will not accept signed title pages in an effort to protect students from identity theft.
- Format the Works Cited section according to the style guide for your discipline

**Additional Help**

If you have more questions, please contact any of these resources (and utilize the TTU Graduate School website).

1. Thesis Director (and Second Reader);
2. HONS 3300/4300 Instructor;
3. Honors College Advisors;
4. Honors College Associate Dean for Students;
5. Check the Graduate School website (http://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/students/current/THDG uidelines.php) for helpful information that the TTU Graduate School provides to students completing theses and dissertations.

**Dual Degrees**

If you are receiving dual degrees, remember that your transcript notation of Highest Honors will accompany only the major associated with the thesis.
Revision Procedures

You will receive detailed feedback on your writing from your HONS 3300/4300 Instructor and from your Thesis Director, but you should learn to proofread and revise on your own following these basic tips.

1. Read the sentences and look for several long sentences one after the other – break up some of these thoughts to make the text easier to read and comprehend.

2. Look for repetitive information – check to make sure that sentences serve a purpose. Sentences may be amplifying, supporting, or evidentiary. Break these sentences up to avoid overwriting.

3. Read out loud to identify clunky wording, syntax problems, or other issues.

4. Interrogate each paragraph: identify the topic sentence and supportive and evidentiary sentences in each. Does each sentence serve its purpose? Do they each inform, explain, evaluate, or persuade?

5. Tighten generalizations – write everything you can imagine in the first draft. Begin to delete information in the subsequent drafts.

6. Think of the reader, who may or may not be an expert on the topic. In your Introduction and Conclusions, try to write for the lay reader.

7. As you write your chapters, make sure you are weaving the argument throughout each chapter/section.

8. Check for a logical progression, linking each previous paragraph/section/chapter to the next. Make clear transitions between paragraphs, topics, and sections.

9. Use an introductory paragraph in each chapter to orient the reader to the point of that chapter, and be clear about how it fits with the previous chapters/argument.

10. Use active voice over passive voice as much as possible.

11. Use concrete nouns. Do not use adjectives, such as “this” or “that,” as subjects of a sentence. Always include the noun.

   Incorrect: This is unproven. Correct: This theory is unproven.

12. Do not trust the word processing spell checker. In MS Word, add technical words to the dictionary so that it is easier to use the red underline as a clue that a word is misspelled.

13. Do not proofread and edit a section or chapter immediately after writing it. Problems are easier to spot if there is time between when the text was written and when you begin proofing.
Revision Checklist

1. Does the sentence/paragraph/section have a clear and concise main idea? Is this idea made clear to the reader in a thesis statement or topic sentence?

2. Is there a specific purpose (such as to inform, entertain, evaluate, or persuade)? Have you made this purpose clear to the reader?

3. Does the introduction create interest in the topic and make your audience want to read on?

4. Is there a clear plan and sense of organization to the document? Does each paragraph develop logically from the previous one?

5. Is each paragraph clearly related to the main idea of the essay? Is there enough information in the essay to support the main idea?

6. Is the main point of each paragraph clear? Is each point adequately and clearly defined in a topic sentence and supported with specific details?

7. Are there clear transitions from one paragraph to the next? Have key words and ideas been given proper emphasis in the sentences and paragraphs?

8. Are the sentences clear and direct? Can they be understood on the first reading? Are the sentences varied in length and structure? Could any sentences be improved by combining or restructuring them?

9. Are the words in the section/chapter/thesis clear and precise? Does the essay maintain a consistent tone?

10. Does the section/chapter/thesis have an effective conclusion – one that emphasizes the main idea and provides a sense of completeness?
Additional Resources

Style Guidelines

Lumsford, The St. Martin’s Handbook (highly recommended—St. Martin’s is a comprehensive resource that includes guides to each of the following manuals)

The Chicago Manual of Style
MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Seventh Edition
Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition

Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship


Everyday Practice of Science: Where Intuition and Passion Meet Objectivity and Logic, Frederick Grinnell, Oxford University Press 2009

Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research, Nicholas H. Steneck, Revised Edition, Office of Research Integrity, August 2007

Sample Common Thesis Documents

Title Page
Contents Page
Short Abstract
Long Abstract
Appendix Pages

Additional formatting may be found in the Graduate School Guidelines: 
http://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/students/current/THDGuidelines.php.

Thesis students may request MS WORD files for each of these documents from the 
Undergraduate Research Coordinator.
Title of Thesis

by

Author

AN HONORS THESIS

for the

UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE

Submitted to the
University Honors College
at Texas Tech University in
partial fulfillment of the
requirement for
the degree designation of
HIGHEST HONORS

MONTH AND YEAR (Ex. May 2019)

Signatures
Approved by:

THESIS DIRECTOR (Insert actual name here) Date
Department (Insert actual department here)

SECOND READER (Insert actual name here) Date
Department (Insert actual department here)

Prof. Kurt Caswell Date
Instructor of HONS 3300 & 4300

Dr. Michael San Francisco Date
Dean, Honors College

The author approves the photocopying of this document for educational purposes.
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In March of 2010, President Barack Obama signed into law the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, enacting major reforms in the American health care system. Health care reform debates in the United States have historically been starkly divided and deeply impassioned. The result of these dramatic debates has often been the stalemate of any meaningful health care reforms, such as the reform attempts of the Clinton administration in 1993. While the health care reform debates of the Obama administration were also extremely inflamed, reform was not stifled. The following thesis is an exploration of the rhetoric that characterized this health care reform debate in the media by examining articles published online between January 2008 and December 2009.
LONG ABSTRACT

Any background noise concurrently present with a target signal is called a masking signal. Masking effectiveness, or the degree to which the background signal distorts or covers the target signal, is a factor of the gender, fundamental frequency, and vocal tract length of the background speakers, among other things. The purpose of this study is to determine if greater masking effectiveness translates into greater effort expended by the listener. The study included 10 adult subjects with normal hearing. The study involved a dual task paradigm. That is, the subject was issued two tasks. The target signal (the signal to which the subject was directed to devote his or her primary attention) consisted of a word list presented to the subject via a pre-recorded .wav files. The subject’s primary task was to repeat these words as accurately as possible. The target signal was played above a background of speech noise. The speech noise was composed of natural speech recordings from four English speakers (i.e., two male and two female speakers). Subjects simultaneously repeated the word lists and pressed a button when they saw a light-emitting diode (LED) display random presentations of a light source. The reaction time for the secondary task (i.e., pressing the button) was analyzed to judge the listening effort involved in the primary task. The reaction times were measured at 0 dB and -5 dB signal-to-noise ratios (i.e., different loudness levels of the background noise as compared to the words) for each subject. The data was analyzed with a within-subjects analysis of variance. The study sought to prove that the amount of listening effort the subject expends changes when listening to different speakers.
APPENDIX A

Interview Sheet

Age: 
Gender: 
Literacy: 
Level of education: 
Occupation: 

Questions:

1. Did you vote in the 2009 elections?
2. If you did not vote in the elections is there a particular reason why?
3. Can you rate what you think was the fairness of the elections from 1-10 (10 being the most favorable)?
4. Why did you rate the elections that way?
5. What do you think of when you hear the expression, human rights? Define.
6. Have you noticed an improvement in human rights since the Civil War ended? If yes, go to #7, if no go to #10.
7. If you think human rights have improved …
   a. What do you think was the nature of the improvement?
   b. What do you think led to the improvement?
   c. When did you notice the improvement began?
8. Do you think that an improvement in human rights affected the 2009 elections in any way?
9. Have you seen or heard of any human rights improvements since the FMLN has been in power?
10. If you do not think human rights have improved …
    a. How do you feel about the human rights situation in your country?
    b. Can you give me an example of why human rights have not improved or decreased?
    c. What led to that?
    d. Since when did you notice that begun?
11. What is your interpretation of the term ‘leftist’ / ‘left”? Can you provide any examples?
12. Do you think the FMLN will survive its term? If so, why? If not, why not?
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The TTU Graduate School is no longer requiring bound copies of theses and (as of 2011) the TTU Library is no longer accepting bound theses. Consequently, the Honors College will no longer bind theses.

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- The TTU Graduate School website provides a link to the on-demand division of the publisher used in prior years. This division, Thesis-On-Demand, has all the specifications and has a positive relationship with TTU.
- There are also several local printers who can provide bound copies of the thesis. If you wish to have your copies match the style of previous years, the specifications are provided below.

Specifications for Thesis Binding

If you wish to bind your thesis, at your own expense, and want it to look like the Honors thesis from past years, the specifications are below. The last printing done by the Honors College was a local printer who quoted $95 per book. There is also the Thesis-on-Demand link from the TTU Graduate School website.

Cover: imitation leather in Sunbeam Library Buckram (blue)
Gold stamping of title and author’s last name on spine
Optional: gold stamping of name of thesis and author’s full name on front cover
Side stitch binding

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The Honors College will keep on file of each submitted Honors thesis.
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Lastname_Firstname_HonorsThesis.doc

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Each Honors Thesis candidate must provide five (5) keywords that are not included in the title of the thesis for the library metadata.
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