

**EASTERN MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY
HONORS COLLEGE**



**SENIOR THESIS
Handbook**

2014-2015

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For Honors Undergraduate Research Fellowships and Senior Thesis Award information, go to www.emich.edu/honors and click on Why Honors?

For Undergraduate Research Stimulus Program (URSP) information, go to http://www.emich.edu/aa/internal_research/ursp.html

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The Eastern Michigan University Honors College provides the intimacy of a small, liberal arts education within the context of a large, comprehensive university. To this end, both educational and cultural experiences for EMU's intellectually talented and motivated students are provided through challenging Honors courses and extra-curricular activities that encourage scholarly curiosity, leadership, civic engagement, and diversity. The Honors College offers undergraduate students opportunities for a wide range of experiences that aid in the development of their appreciation for creativity, the arts, sciences, critical issues facing contemporary society, and diversity among people and their cultures.

Office: 734.487.0341

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Web Site: <http://www.emich.edu/honors/>

Facebook: EMU Honors College

Twitter: EMU Honors

Introduction to the Senior Honors Thesis/Creative Project

The Honors Senior Honors Thesis or Project is the major culminating experience for graduating with Departmental Honors. It signifies movement into the professional conversation in a field of study and showcases accomplishments of the scholar as they move from undergraduate study and research to graduate school or the workplace setting. As a student moves through Departmental Honors, it is imperative to please keep the following in mind.

- All Departmental Honors students must complete a Senior Honors Thesis/Creative Project.
- Attendance at a Senior Thesis/Creative Project Workshop is required before submitting the Senior Thesis/Creative Project proposal.
- It is recommended that you attend a Senior Thesis/Creative Project Workshop during the first semester of your junior year.
- Regardless of the type of project, written components are required.
- Both academic and Honors credit must be earned for the Thesis/Creative Project, usually but not always through three hours of independent study.

Some departments require completion of a specific Honors thesis seminar or a research course; students must be sure to check with the Honors Departmental Advisor about requirements in their area.

The Senior Thesis/Creative Project may take various forms. In addition to a lengthy research paper, students may elect to do one of the following.

- a public performance
- a documented lab experiment
- a computer program, a work of art
- a complex mathematical proof
- a portfolio of original designs

Each of these requires sufficient prefatory materials to allow the reader to fully understand the context, connection to professional literature, and purpose of the project as well as a concluding reflection that describes the impact of the project on future work. Whatever form the project takes, it should be a demanding exercise (three hours of credit presupposes about 150 hours of work), and the result should demonstrate exceptional skill and understanding.

Planning the Project

As you prepare for your Senior Thesis/Creative Project, there are a number of things to keep in mind.

Build upon genuine interest and questions. This culminating project should build upon questions and areas of interest that you have identified during your undergraduate study. What areas interest you? What questions do you find fascinating? Do they build upon existing undergraduate research that you are doing? If so, how do they extend the research? Consider keeping a notebook in which you log in observations, questions, and areas of interest throughout your exploration in your major/minor. These materials will help you shape your Honors Thesis/Project.

Planning for success. Successful projects must be carefully planned in advance. **Do not wait** until the semester you intend to graduate before beginning your thesis work. The best time to begin is during the early part of the junior year or after earning at least six hours of Departmental Honors credit.

Meet early with your Departmental Honors Advisor to discuss the thesis/project and, if necessary, request help in identifying a faculty mentor. The supervisor should be a full-time faculty member who is knowledgeable in the subject and available to provide criticism and direction. S/he will also evaluate the final product and conduct any oral or written defense that may be required. Once you have identified a faculty mentor, meet with him/her to refine the scope of your project, agree on a project description, and negotiate such matters as format, methodology, and deadlines.

Developing the Senior Thesis/Creative Project Proposal. Once the nature of the project is established, submit a Senior Thesis Proposal to the Director of the Honors College. This proposal includes a list of Departmental Honors courses that have been completed as well as a description of the thesis. The proposal will be signed/approved by the Faculty Mentor/Supervisor, Departmental Honors Advisor, and Honors Director. *Research cannot begin before the proposal is accepted.*

Establishing timelines. To allow sufficient time for your project to be completed, consider establishing a timeline that you can use to move through the project. While you can always adjust your timeline, having a clear idea of what will be completed during each semester will be very helpful.

As with any long-term project, you may run into unexpected delays along the way. For that reason, you should complete much of the actual work during the next-to-last semester. Since the thesis must be completed and submitted to both the academic department and the Director of the Honors College *before you graduate*, do not jeopardize graduation with Departmental Honors by waiting until the last minute.

Additionally, expect that everyone who approves (signs off on) the thesis will want to read it and possibly give feedback that you will need to incorporate into the work before they will approve it. Leave enough time at the end of the semester to obtain these signatures.

Seek Human Subject Approval. Any project that deals with humans must be reviewed and approved by the University Human Subject Review Committee. Committees operate in each college, and information about preparing documents for submission can be obtained from the supervising professor or Departmental Honors Advisor. In addition, coaching is available through the Honors College. *Remember, research cannot be started before proper review and approval are received.*

Completing the Project

Securing Approvals. The completed thesis signature page must be signed by the Faculty Mentor/Supervisor, Departmental Honors Advisor, Department Head, and the Honors College Director. Students are responsible for obtaining the first three of these signatures. Once this is completed, please deliver the thesis/project to the Honors College office

- *three* copies of the completed thesis with *three* original signed signature pages
- *one copy of the Library Release Forms*
- *one* copy of your graded Honors Thesis Project Contract.

The Honors Director will review, approve, and sign your thesis before sending it for publication. Bound copies will be sent to the student and the department. One bound copy will be kept in the Honors College and an electronic version of the thesis will be sent to Halle Library for posting to Digital Commons. Again, expect that everyone who signs off on the thesis will want to provide feedback that may need to be incorporated into the work before they will approve it. Plan your time accordingly.

Moving to Publication. Although many thesis projects will be extended research papers, some will involve public performances, works of art, lab experiments, and the like. Remember that all projects *must include a written component* that carefully documents the research or creative activity. Controlled scientific experiments, for example, may be accompanied by a lab report, charts, graphs, and tables; creative projects may be documented by a journal, explanations of performance decisions, photographs, annotated scripts and scores, or a detailed explanation of why specific methods were chosen. Projects that do not reflect a traditional research format must include a context to help the reader understand the importance of the project and influences that helped shape your thinking as well as a reflection that helps others understand the importance of the project to you and next steps that might emerge in future work. (See sample Honors theses at (<http://commons.emich.edu/honors>)).

The thesis must meet certain formal guidelines. It **must be word processed using a 12 point font** (preferably a Times based font), **double-spaced on 8 1/2" x 11" paper, leaving a 1 1/2" left-side margin and 1" at top, bottom, and right sides.** It **must begin with a Title Page** (see sample in this packet), followed by a Table of Contents. Charts, graphs, tables, and illustrations may be incorporated into the main body of the text or shown as appendices. The main body should be followed by Endnotes, Bibliography, and Appendices, if they are appropriate. Please do not staple or use paper that is hole-punched.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the manuscript is free of grammatical, mechanical, and stylistic errors. *Unless your department requires a particular style manual*, follow the latest MLA (Modern Language Association) Style sheet. The thesis/project will be posted on Digital Commons and, hence, be available to all researchers and employers who wish to reference your work. Therefore, it is imperative that your written product be carefully edited to reflect your skill as a writer and researcher.

Receiving Honors Credit. As noted earlier, both academic and Honors credit for the thesis must be earned. To earn academic credit, students generally take an independent study through which they complete the thesis. It is also possible to tie the thesis to a specific course in the area in which a student is earning Departmental Honors. The second option is not recommended as this

will add three credits of work to an existing course (e.g. a three credit course contracted for the thesis would carry an expected commitment of a six credit course). To earn Honors credit, you must submit an Honors Contract for this course. Check with your Departmental Honors Advisor to see if there is a specific course you need to take for thesis credit.

The completed, signed thesis, along with the graded Honors Contract, is due in the Honors office by the project deadline specified on the contract and in the Senior Thesis Proposal. Typically, the thesis/project should be submitted to the Honors College by December 1st for fall graduation in fall and by April 1st for winter graduation. Because it may take some time to obtain the required signatures, try to have it completed a week or two earlier.

In the event a student needs extra time, they must obtain the written permission of the Honors Director. While an extension will be granted when possible, **the Honors College must have the completed thesis no later than the last day of the semester in which a student plans to graduate.** We want students to complete their thesis successfully, and we'll do whatever we can to help. However, we must send grades to Records and Registration in a timely fashion, so our timelines are generally not negotiable. If we do not have the thesis by the end of your last semester, it may not be possible to graduate with Departmental Honors during the semester you planned.

Partners in Academic Research: Librarians and the Halle Library

The Bruce T. Halle Library at EMU offers the information sources, services, citation management tools, and one-on one help that will support success as a researcher.

To complete the research required as an Honors student, you will need to thoroughly understand the research process and learn to effectively and efficiently access information resources through the Halle Library. There are a number of online sources that can help you to develop these skills.

- *Research 101@EMU* (<http://www.emich.edu/library/research101/>) is an interactive online tutorial for students seeking an introduction to research skills. The tutorial covers the basics, including how to select a topic and develop research questions, as well as how to select, search for, find, and evaluate information sources. There is also a section that helps students to distinguish between scholarly and popular sources.
- *Using the Halle Library Video Series* (<http://goo.gl/f8fxS>) is a basic, 30-minute introduction to accessing information through the Halle Library. Topics include finding books and other materials in the library catalog, basic article search, using course reserves, and a tour of the Library.
- *Understanding and Using Sources* (<http://www.emich.edu/library/help/sources.php>) provides a number of resources that can help you to better understand academic sources and how to appropriately use them in academic writing.
- *Citing Sources* (<http://www.emich.edu/library/help/citing.php>) provides access to citation guides and software that can be used to manage your citations, such as Zotero.

Individualized assistance from a librarian is also available. Librarians at EMU are professors with advanced degrees in information science, and often other disciplines as well. They are experts in the use, access, assessment, and management of information, and they are happy to assist you with your research. You can request help at the Information and Reference Desk on the first floor of the Halle Library, drop in at the Academic Projects Center in 116 Halle Library, contact them through email or instant messaging, or schedule an appointment to meet one-on-one with a

subject specialist librarian. To identify the subject specialist for your project, go to the following link: <http://www.emich.edu/library/about/directory/specialist.php>.

- Ask a Librarian (<http://www.emich.edu/library/help/ask.php>) - provides details on how to obtain assistance from the Library's professors/librarians.
- Research Guides (<http://guides.emich.edu/home>) are a primary tool that librarians develop to help you to access the best resources on your topic of interest. Guides are available for a wide range of subjects, as well as for selected courses.

Securing Support for Your Research

Applying for Undergraduate Fellowship Awards. Many Honors students apply for Undergraduate Fellowships to help support their research. Applications for Undergraduate Fellowships are due October 15 (winter) and March 15 (summer and fall). Approximately 45 awards are made annually based on faculty review and approval of applications. Eligible students will have completed at least 56 credit hours and be enrolled as a full-time student in good standing with the Honors College. These awards are competitive and require active faculty involvement. See the Honors College website for details at www.emich.edu/honors.

Undergraduate Research Stimulus Awards. The URSP is intended to facilitate research partnerships between undergraduate students and Eastern Michigan University faculty. Go to http://www.emich.edu/aa/internal_research/ursp.html for information on this awards. Also see Attachment F.

Senior Thesis Awards. The Honors College offers Senior Thesis Awards annually for particularly well executed projects. These awards are very competitive and are intended to acknowledge outstanding work. Application forms are available in the Honors College office and from the Honors website (www.emich.edu/honors). Proposals are judged on the basis of quality of the proposal and the availability of funding. The application deadline is October 15th and eligible theses must be completed between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015.

List of Attachments

Attachment A, Senior Thesis Check List
Attachment B, Human Subjects Review Request
Attachment C, Rights and Permission Form for Electronic Honors Senior Thesis
Attachment D, Senior Thesis Application
Attachment E, Signature Page

Attachment A

Honors College Senior Thesis Check List

The listing below has been created to support planning through the Senior Thesis process.

_____ Make notes of areas of particular interest, questions that seem most intriguing, and new ideas that emerge from other research projects throughout your undergraduate studies.

_____ Set up a meeting with your Departmental Honors Advisor no later than the end of your junior year, or after completing six (6) Departmental Honors credits, set.

_____ Obtain a Faculty Mentor/Supervisor from your department and set up a meeting for discussion of your project.

_____ Complete the Senior Thesis Proposal with a brief description of the project and submit to the Honors College Director once you have agreed on your project with the Departmental Honors Advisor and the Faculty Mentor/Supervisor.

_____ Obtain Human Subjects approval, as necessary. Be sure to check with your Departmental Honors Advisor to determine if approval is needed in your College as well as the timeline for obtaining approval. Please note:

All research using human subjects must obtain ethics approval from the University Human Subject Research Committee (UHSRC). Approval must be obtained *prior* to starting your research and usually takes between 3 to 4 weeks from the time you submit your application, so please plan accordingly. The UHSRC uses an online submission system to complete the application, which can be accessed from the Research compliance website at http://www.emich.edu/ord/compliance/compliance_subdir/human.html. Instructions for completing and submitting the application are also available on the website. Please contact Research Compliance with any questions at human.subjects@emich.edu or 734-487-3090.

_____ Complete as much work as possible in the next-to-last semester before graduation.

_____ Edit your thesis carefully and seek help from an editor as needed. The thesis will be published on Digital Commons so you will want it to reflect your very best work.

_____ Secure approval of your thesis/project from your Faculty Mentor/Supervisor, Departmental Honors Advisor, and Department Head. All will read and sign the cover page once they are satisfied with the quality of your work. Once you have received these approvals, submit your thesis/project to the Director of the Honors College. Make sure you leave sufficient time for this process in addition to time for possible changes/corrections!

_____ Complete the two library release forms and turn them in with your Senior Thesis/Project. Remember, you'll need 3 original signature pages and 3 copies of the thesis/project.

Attachment B

**Eastern Michigan University
University Human Subjects Review Committee (UHSRC)
REQUEST FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL**

Use this form for initial approvals and major protocol modifications. For minor changes, please use the *Minor Modification* form. To renew an approval after one year, please use the *Continuation Form*.

CHECK ONE

FACULTY/STAFF GRAD Student UG Student

Non-EMU PI

PROJECT TYPE – STUDENTS

Dissertation Master's Thesis GR Project

Honor's Thesis UG Project

Graduate and Undergraduate student researchers conducting minimal risk undergraduate or graduate theses/projects (doctoral non-dissertation research) should submit to the appropriate college-level committee. **Upload materials as follows and submit one paper copy to the identified office:**

College of Arts and Science (<http://commons.emich.edu/cashs/>), 200 Boone Hall

College of Business (<http://commons.emich.edu/cobhs/>), 473 Owen

College of Education (<http://commons.emich.edu/coehs/>), 310 Porter

College of Health and Human Services (<http://commons.emich.edu/chhs/>), 305 Marshall

College of Technology (<http://commons.emich.edu/coths/>), 150 Sill

If this is your first time using Digital Commons, directions on how to register and submit materials can be found as a link on the website's cover page. Final draft of the thesis will be submitted by the Honors College.

Attachment C

**EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Rights and Permission Form for
Electronic Honors Senior Thesis
Placement in Digital Commons @ EMU**

Submit this form to the Honors College for approval and signatures. Retain a copy for your files

Student Name: _____ E-Number: _____
Document title: _____

Student Agreement:

I hereby grant to Eastern Michigan University and its employees the nonexclusive license to archive and make accessible, under the conditions specified below, my honors thesis in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. This is a license rather than an assignment, and I, therefore, retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of the honors thesis. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this honors thesis.

In addition to the unrestricted display of the bibliographic information and the abstract, I agree that the above mentioned document be placed in Eastern Michigan University's institutional repository with the following status (choose one option):

- Release the entire work immediately for access worldwide.
- Provide access to the entire work only to Eastern Michigan University Library and patrons. At the end of the one-year period, either I or Eastern Michigan University Library may request an extension for an additional one year. At the end of the one-year secure period (or its extension, if such is requested), the work will be released for access worldwide. I understand that my work may only be secured from view for a total of two years. If I choose to release the work for worldwide access sooner, I will contact the Eastern Michigan University Library, 955 West Circle Drive, Ypsilanti, MI 48917-2207.
- Secure the entire work for patent and/or proprietary purposes for a period of one year, providing no access to any part of the work. During this period, I, the copyright owner, also agree not to exercise my ownership rights, including public use in works, without prior authorization from Eastern Michigan University Library. At the end of the one-year period, either I or Eastern Michigan University Library may request an extension for an additional year. At the end of the one-year secure period (or its extension, if such is requested), the work will be released for access worldwide. I understand that my work may only be secured from view for a total of two years. If I choose to release the work for worldwide access sooner, I will contact the Eastern Michigan University Library, 955 West Circle Drive, Ypsilanti, MI 48917-2207.

The undersigned agrees to abide by the statements above, and agrees that this approval form updates any and all previous approval forms submitted theretofore.

Student Signature _____ Date: _____

This document has received final approval.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Director, Honors College

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Electronic Format Information Sheet
Electronic Honors Senior Thesis
Placement in Digital Commons @ EMU

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Name/Initial: _____

(The official form of your name used for publication purposes. Please note that middle name or initial is optional.)

Email address:

Phone (primary): _____

Phone (secondary): _____

Dept./School: _____

Primary Advisor's Name: _____

Honors Senior Thesis Title:

Does your honors senior thesis have an abstract?

If your honors thesis does not have an abstract, you can provide a brief abstract (no more than 250 words) here:

Key words:

(List up to 6 key words or phrases, preferably words or phrases that do not appear in your senior thesis' title or abstract)

Do you have any supplementary files?

If so, what formats are these supplementary files (video, audio, images, for example)?

Please save this form. Use the naming convention of your FirstnameLastnameThesisyear (example, LoriSmithThesis2012).

Send a copy of this completed form as an attachment to rsipe@emich.edu.

Attachment D

HONORS COLLEGE

SENIOR THESIS APPLICATION

DIRECTIONS:

1. Fill in all required information.
2. Obtain instructor and departmental honors adviser signatures.
3. Return original to the Honors College **prior** to the semester in which you plan to register for the Honors Senior Thesis.
4. Retain a copy of this completed form for your records.

NAME _____

STUDENT NUMBER _____ EMAIL: _____@emich.edu

LOCAL PHONE _____

MAJOR(S) _____

MINOR(S) _____

DEPARTMENTAL HONORS WORK COMPLETED

COURSES:

1) _____ 2) _____

3) _____ 4) _____

TOTAL HOURS _____

EXPECTED SEMESTER OF THESIS COMPLETION: _____

TENTATIVE THESIS TITLE: _____

THESIS PROJECT DESCRIPTION*

Attach a one-two page overview of your senior thesis project. Your proposal must include the following:

- The topic and scope of the project including the significance of the research
- The proposed methodology (e.g. laboratory research, library or archival research, interviews, field work, etc.)
- Form of the completed thesis (e.g. a 40-60 page research paper, creative musical recital, detailed lab report) and proposed timeline

Student name (Printed) _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Name of Supervising Faculty (Printed) _____ Date _____

Supervising Faculty Signature _____ Date _____

Name of Departmental Honors Advisor (Printed) _____ Date _____

Departmental Honors Advisor Signature _____ Date _____

Honors College Director (Printed) _____ Date _____

Honors College Director Signature _____ Date _____

* Supervising Faculty Member: This form authorizes the culminating project of this student's undergraduate Honors experience within the major (or minor). By signing you are approving the project in principle as acceptable based on the guidelines for the Senior Thesis as developed by the Honors College and your home department.

Attachment E (template)

TITLE OF YOUR PAPER IN ALL CAPS

By

Name

A Senior Thesis Submitted to the

Eastern Michigan University

Honors College

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation

with Honors in _____ (include the department name)

Approved at Ypsilanti, Michigan, on this date _____

Supervising Instructor (Print Name and have signed)

Honors Advisor (Print Name and have signed)

Department Head (Print Name and have signed)

Honors Director (Print Name and have signed)