

# HONORS REQUIREMENTS

The Honors Thesis is the culmination of your participation in the W.A. Franke Honors College at the University of Arizona. It is intended to be a personalized research experience in which you explore a concept while incorporating the knowledge or investigative techniques learned during your undergraduate career. It is one half of the following equation for graduating with honors -

## Graduating with Honors

1. You must meet the Franke Honors College requirements which include:
  - completion of the required number of Honors units,
  - complete a Frankie Honors Seminar
  - completion of a 6-unit Honors thesis during your final two semesters, and
  - a final cumulative GPA of at least 3.4 at the time of graduation.
2. You must complete an Honors Thesis, as approved by your faculty thesis mentor. The Honors Thesis is a research project of at least one-year duration for which there must be a prospectus, and a thesis. The thesis project is expected to help you:
  - integrate your knowledge of biology, bioinformatics or ecology and evolution,
  - give you an opportunity to delve deeply into and think critically about a particular area of biology by engaging in a sustained research project, and
  - develop an appreciation for and skill in research in the your field.

Your honors thesis should be a well-designed research project, guided by a faculty member, carried out by you, and typically written in the form of a manuscript such as would be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal appropriate for the area of your research. Excellent writing is expected. We do not require your faculty thesis mentor to be in the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology department, only that their research is relevant to your major.

## Thesis/Capstone Timeline

The following timeline was created by the Franke Honors College. Students are responsible for checking the Franke Honors College website for any updates to this timeline.

<https://www.honors.arizona.edu/academic-requirements>

Completion of an Honors thesis requires preparation and planning. You will build up to your thesis throughout your years at UA by completing coursework, participating in research, engaging with faculty, and narrowing down your areas of academic and professional interest. Ideally, by the end of your junior year, you should have a well-developed thesis plan that you can implement in your senior year.

Follow these basic steps when preparing for the Honors Thesis:

#### Explore Your Thesis Topic

Early in the junior year, you will begin narrowing down your focus for an Honors Thesis engaging in discussions with faculty and materials from your classes. You can search the Thesis and Dissertation database to read former students' theses.

#### Identify a Faculty Thesis Mentor

A faculty thesis mentor is the person who will supervise your thesis and award your final grade for your thesis. Students are free to work with any tenure-track faculty member on campus as long as your thesis topic is in an area of EEB, Biology or Bioinformatics.

It is advantageous to find a faculty thesis mentor no later than your junior year and conduct research in their laboratory. The goal is to meet regularly with your mentor and develop a proposal over the course of the second semester of junior year. *Students who do not follow this recommended timeline for identifying a Faculty Advisor risk missing the thesis submission deadline.*

#### Submit the Honors Thesis Prospectus

Students who are completing an Honors Thesis are required to submit an Honors Thesis Prospectus to the Franke Honors College. The EEB program requires the submission of the Independent Study/ Directed Research Proposal Form with your prospectus or with a summary of your prospectus.

#### Register for Thesis credit

The thesis is a two-semester commitment that demands a minimum of six units of work, three units of ECOL 498H per semester, usually taken in the senior year. Students are not permitted to complete all six thesis units in a single semester. You will enroll in ECOL 498H

by submitting the Independent Study/ Directed Research Proposal Form ([located on the EEB website](#)) to the EEB program coordinator. You must enroll in ECOL units to apply to your major. Do not enroll through your faculty mentor's department. Forms are due to the Program by the second week of the semester in which you are starting your thesis.

PLEASE NOTE: Each unit of lab credit officially requires 3 hours of work per week so enrolling for the required 3 units of honors thesis credits per semester means a minimum of 9 hours in the lab per week. Students cannot enroll in fewer or more honors thesis units at once. You and your faculty thesis mentor should discuss this up front to come to a clear, mutual understanding of the expectation for weekly lab work.

## Engage in Your Thesis Project

Working under the guidance of your faculty thesis mentor, you will engage in a personalized research experience. Although the details of the project will vary from student to student, most will begin by writing a draft of the statement of purpose, the methodology/capstone design, or the literature review. This is generally followed by collecting data, completing data analysis, synthesizing and drawing conclusions, and revising the written version of the thesis. Your faculty thesis advisor will award a grade in your first semester of thesis work based on the progress you have made up to that point. Remember to register for your next three units of thesis credit for your second semester.

## Submit Your Thesis

Prior to the end of the semester, you will submit your thesis to your faculty thesis mentor in order to receive feedback, complete any revisions needed, and receive a final grade. Students completing an Honors Thesis must submit their final thesis to the Franke Honors College by the last day of classes before graduation. You are encouraged to plan ahead and allow yourself enough time to make any needed revisions. Once your thesis has been approved by your advisor, you will submit an electronic copy of your thesis document to the Franke Honors College

Note that you can submit your thesis only after your degree check has been completed by the Franke Honors College. Submission guidelines and forms can be found here: <https://frankehonors.arizona.edu/academics/honors-thesis/submitting-your-thesis>

## Thesis/Capstone Prospectus Guidelines

These are all available here

<https://arizona.app.box.com/file/2101357598342?s=vno73jd3o4jtj1bcuulvxa4pboc8j9l>