



Honors in the Major 2017 - 2018 Thesis Chair Fact Sheet

Our appreciation is extended to all of the faculty members who contribute their time and expertise to students pursuing the Honors in the Major program. The Honors in the Major program allows students to gain applied research experience and contribute new knowledge to their discipline, and this opportunity would certainly not be available without the participation of faculty. We hope that the following information and guidelines will assist faculty with the Honors in the Major (HIM) thesis process. Please also consult the Honors in the Major Handbook for more detailed information, responsibilities, and deadlines. For any additional questions, please contact Vanessa McRae (Vanessa.McRae@ucf.edu) Director for the Office of Research and Community Engagement. Thank you again for your support.

Thesis Chair

The thesis chair plays a formative role in the development of future scholars. In addition to being a scholarly mentor and role model, the thesis chair also serves as a guide who helps students navigate through the more technical aspects of the thesis process (e.g. project development, research, writing, formatting, reviewing, and scheduling). Successful Honors in the Major students have thesis chairs who not only mentor them on issues of scholarly content but also guide them through the process of thesis preparation and defense.

Thesis Committee

The thesis committee comprises of at least two faculty members including the thesis chair. An additional committee member can be from within or outside of the major. The additional committee member must hold a terminal degree and/or be a subject matter expert in the field of the student's Honors in the Major thesis*. Additional members can be added at the discretion of the student and thesis chair. Thesis chairs should assist his or her student in forming the committee because students are not always familiar with issues such as faculty status and research interests.

(*Exceptions may apply upon the recommendation of the Department Chair to the Dean of TBHC. The Department Chair would be required to provide a justification statement explaining why the proposed committee member should be considered to serve on the thesis committee. The recommendation and justification statement along with a copy of the proposed committee member's CV should be submitted to the Dean of TBHC for final review and approval.)

Expectations of an Honors in the Major Student and the Thesis Project

As an undergraduate thesis program, we expect student participants will practice excellent communication skills, be self-motivated in researching and writing, and will also produce a quality research project that contributes knowledge to his or her respective discipline. If the thesis chair's department has certain expectations for the structure and content of an Honors in the Major thesis the thesis chair should share this information with his or her students early in the thesis writing process. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that he or she is following through with these expectations in a timely and satisfactory manner and asking questions if he or she needs assistance. An Honors in the Major thesis will:

- Contain a very concise research question
- Be substantially supported
- Contain a methodology or objective that is appropriate to answer the research question (hard/social science majors)
- Demonstrate a clear mastery of the skills of the creative discipline (arts & humanities majors)
- Present a solid conclusion that is pertinent to the research question or project
- Contain information from a majority of peer-reviewed or scholarly sources (may be more at the thesis chair's discretion)

Thesis Editor

An integral component of the thesis process is learning to write in accordance with the style and format of an academic discipline. The Burnett Honors College has a thesis editor who consults with the student(s) during his or her thesis semester. The primary responsibility of the editor is to assist students with the formatting related aspects of his or her theses. While reading and editing should first be the responsibility the thesis chair, the editor will help ensure that each student's thesis conforms to all of the technical requirements for publication through the UCF library.

Course Grading

Students may receive either a letter grade or pass/fail for each Honors in the Major course. The grade sheet that faculty receive from the Registrar's office at the end of each semester should provide both grading scale options. The thesis chair can select the preferred grading scale for his or her student. In order for students to continue in the Honors in the Major program and to be certified for Honors in the Major distinction, a grade of A, B, or S must be earned in each Honors in the Major course. Students will not be allowed to continue his or her work in the Honors in the Major program if they are awarded a U or any letter grade below a B.

The Burnett Honors College Graduation Banquet

The Burnett Honors College hosts an Honors Graduation Banquet at the end of the fall, and spring semesters. At this event, Honors in the Major students are recognized for the completion of their theses and invested with the Honors medallion to be worn at commencement. We invite all of our thesis chairs to this event when one of his or her Honors in the Major students – who has successfully completed thesis – is scheduled to graduate from UCF. We encourage our thesis chairs to accompany their students to the stage when receiving their medallion from our Provost and Dean.

Thesis Chair Honorarium

The Burnett Honors College recognizes that thesis chairs expend a great deal of time and effort guiding their students through the thesis process. As a token of our appreciation, faculty thesis chairs receive an honorarium for each student who completes the Honors in the Major program. This amount is automatically transferred to the thesis chair's department's expense account a few weeks after the end of the semester in which his or her Honors in the Major students complete his or her thesis. At that time, we will notify the thesis chair by letter of the account transfer. Please note that how and when this amount is spent is an issue that the thesis chair should discuss with his or her Department Chair and department accountant.

Timetable for the Thesis Process

The Honors in the Major program requires that students enroll in a minimum of two semesters (six credit hours) of Honors course work. The first semester is Honors Directed Readings (4903H – 3 hours), and the second semester is Honors Thesis (4970H – 3 hours). The oral defense occurs towards the end of the semester in which students are registered for 4970H.

The Honors in the Major Handbook has detailed sections on the progression towards graduation with Honors in the Major distinction. Both the thesis chair and student should regularly consult the handbook (and with each other) when assessing progress toward Honors in the Major completion. In addition, the Honors in the Major website has updated information about deadlines each semester. These deadlines are fixed because several UCF units (e.g. Registrar and library) require timely delivery of thesis and graduation materials. Thesis chairs should be particularly mindful of the following student responsibilities and deadlines:

Prior to the First Semester Students:

- Complete the online Honors in the Major application and course registration form. These are sent via email to eligible students by the Office of Research and Community Engagement and requires the thesis chair's signatures.
- Register for Honors in the Major Directed Readings (4903H – 3 hours).

During the Directed Readings Students:

- Create a meeting schedule with his or her thesis chair. Begins working on project development and background research. Begins to formulate ideas for his or her research proposal.
- Participate in the **Honors in the Major Orientation and one additional workshop** (Orientation dates will be sent to students via his or her Knights email. In addition, all students are sent a link to the Honors in the Major Webcourse).
- Select, in consultation with thesis chair, at least one additional thesis committee member. The entire committee should be formed at least six weeks prior to the end of the student's first semester.
- Completes thesis proposal.
- Submit thesis proposal to the thesis committee no later than two-three weeks prior to the last day of classes.
- Upload the thesis proposal with the signed **Thesis Proposal Cover Page** to the Office of Research and Community using the online application portal by the appropriate deadline.
- Register for Honors Thesis (4970H – 3 hours). Students must use the **HIM Directed Readings and Thesis Registration** form, which is obtained through the Office of Research and Community Engagement.

During the Thesis Semester Students:

- Submit a **HIM Intent to Graduate** form to BHC 102A by the appropriate deadline if they are planning to graduate that semester. This form is available online at <http://www.research.honors.ucf.edu>.
Note: Students graduating in the Summer semester must follow the Spring Intent to Graduate deadline since the Honors Graduation banquet is only offered in the Fall and Spring semester.
- Establish the date of oral defense with thesis chair and committee at least 6 weeks prior to the last day of classes.
- Meet with the Thesis Editor for his or her initial format review. Students must bring the front matter, the body of his or her thesis, and a working reference list.
- Complete thesis.
- Submit a completed copy of his or her thesis to thesis chair and committee at least two-three weeks before scheduled defense date.
- Submit signed notice of defense through e-mail (orce@ucf.edu) to the Office of Research and Community Engagement at least one week prior to his or her date of defense.
- Complete oral defense.
- Incorporate committee's recommendations into his or her thesis. Makes all formatting corrections suggested by the Thesis Editor from the format review.
- Submit a copy of the thesis to Turnitin.com. The thesis adviser may submit this on the student's behalf through his or her Turnitin.com account, or the thesis chair may create a course section through his or her Turnitin.com account (or through Webcourses) for the student to upload a final draft of his or her thesis. ***This is a UCF requirement for thesis writers at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Without this review and verification that the thesis is, indeed, original work, The Burnett Honors College, and UCF will not accept a student thesis for publication or completion of the program.*** If a student's thesis chair does not have a Turnitin.com account, they may contact the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning which manages free Turnitin.com accounts for UCF faculty.
- Submit the signed Thesis Attachment form and Thesis Approval form to the Office of Research and Community Engagement (BHC102). Student will then receive instructions on how to upload his or her thesis to UCF's Showcase of Text, Archives, Research & Scholarship (STARS) system.
- Begin the thesis submission process as outlined in the email sent to the student.

Once again, we extend our thanks for the services faculty members provide to our undergraduate thesis writers and to the Honors in the Major program. We hope that mentoring an Honors in the Major student will be an enriching experience, and our staff looks forward to working with faculty mentors in the coming semesters.