

UND Honors Research Scholars

Senior Honors Project (HON 489) Guidelines

- The Senior Honors Project (SHP) is a 3-credit, one semester, independent, faculty-led intensive research and/or creative work for Honors Research Scholars in their senior year who have maintained an overall 3.2 GPA that culminates in a signature, original product at the end of the semester. The product may be a research thesis, a white paper, literary work, an art exhibition, a musical or theatrical performance, or other focused demonstration of four years' worth of work and learning. Generally, the product should be of sufficiently high quality that it could be considered a sample for postgraduate application in that field (e.g., a writing sample for graduate study in a given discipline).
- The faculty advisor will be considered the expert in the field and will thus determine what sort of project and other specifications (e.g., length of paper) would be appropriate work for an Honors capstone in *that* discipline.
- The faculty advisor must hold a terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D. or M.F.A.) in their field. S/he should ideally (but not necessarily) be someone with whom the student has already taken classes, so that the SHP is a continuation or expansion of work that has already begun.
- If an appropriate faculty member cannot be found who is willing to advise the student's SHP, the Honors Director should be notified in the semester prior to the SHP, and another Honors Faculty or member of the Senate Honors Committee will be appointed. This option should be a last resort, especially if the available Faculty/Senate member is not an expert in the field of interest.
- The primary faculty advisor will ultimately assign a grade to the student's SHP at the end of that semester in which the work is done. Thus, the SHP Committee will consist of two people: the primary faculty advisor and the Honors Director (who will register the grade assigned by the faculty advisor at the end of the semester).
- Students are strongly discouraged from pursuing a topic or project in which they have no background from previous coursework. The SHP should build on some knowledge or experience in the student's college career.

Process

1. The Honors Research Scholar should formally ask and converse with their chosen professor about being their SHP faculty advisor at least one full semester before they intend to enroll in the SHP, keeping in mind that it will require time and work on the part of the faculty member.
2. Once a faculty advisor has agreed to serve, the student, with their advisor, should complete a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This form, along with a Proposal for the Senior Honors Project, should be submitted to the Honors Director **at least two full weeks prior to the start of the semester in which the SHP will take place**.
3. The Proposal for the SHP should be *at least* two double spaced pages and should detail in a coherent, logical fashion, the following items:
 - a. The focus and scope of the project, and the academic discipline(s), which pertain to it.
 - b. The nature of the coursework, experience, or preparation previously done by the student which can serve as some foundation for the work to be done within the SHP.
 - c. The research or specialty of the faculty advisor and how it is relevant or appropriate for overseeing the project.
 - d. Detailed steps and timeline for work to be done in the semester. For a thesis, an outline is recommended (but not required) as part of the proposal.
 - e. A description of the nature of the final product (e.g., a 25-page research paper), including why it will be significant and unique.
 - f. For a thesis or paper, a tentative bibliography should be included.
 - g. Your plans for dissemination of the product. For example, you might submit your paper to an undergraduate journal, present at a national conference or at the Spring UND Undergraduate Research Conference (URC), give a recital, host an art exhibition, etc. You must plan to disseminate your work in some fashion.
4. Once the MOA and Proposal are received and approved by the Honors Director, the student may register for 3 credits of HON 489 (with a permission number from the Director) for the following semester.
5. The faculty advisor will be responsible for overseeing the student's progress in the semester. No later than 3 p.m. on the Friday of finals week of that semester, the faculty advisor should submit a recommended grade for the project to the Honors Director, who will register it when grades are due. (See "Honors Thesis and Project Grade Report" form.) Extensions will not be granted, except in extenuating circumstances.