Biology Honors/Senior Thesis

**Chair:** Dr. K. Major

**Biology Honors Committee Members:**
Drs. L. Frost, J. Henning, K. Major, J. Mata, J. McCreadie, J. Perez, and J. Strickland

Revised Spring 2022
The key difference between University Honors and “Senior Thesis” programs is the GPA requirement. By the Junior year, Senior Thesis students must maintain a 3.0, while Honors students must maintain a 3.5 GPA to remain in their respective programs. The Department of Biology requires three semesters of research, including prospectus development (HON 301), one local (e.g., USA Annual Research Forum) or regional presentation of scholarly work, and the public defense of a final thesis toward the completion of the Honors diploma. All research and project milestones are to be overseen and approved by a three-member Advisory Committee, comprised of the student’s mentor, a member of the Biology Honors Committee (BHC), and one additional faculty member (inside or outside the Department).

**Semester 1**

- University Honors (HON 301)
- Identify Mentor
- Identify Project Topic and Research Question
- Advisory Committee Formation
- Project and Prospectus Development
  - Formatting for prospectus and theses are dictated by discipline; successfully presented/defended examples of prospectus/thesis documents can be provided by Dr. K. Major.
- Draft of Prospectus to Advisory Committee for Review
  - Two weeks BEFORE FINALS
  - First Advisory Committee meeting
  - Provide update/Biology Honors Progress Report to committee members
  - Forward Copy of Signed Form to:  K. Major, Chair BHC
- Consider applying for Sigma Xi research funding...

**Semester 2**

- Enroll in 1-3 h Honors Thesis (BLY 499) or Directed Studies (BLY 494)
  - One BLY 499 may count as a “W” course to fulfill one of two writing requirements
- Begin research, if not begun at this point
- Meet with Advisory Committee
  - Two weeks BEFORE FINALS
  - Advisory Committee meeting
  - Advisory Committee Signs FINAL Written Prospectus
  - Forward Copy of Signed Biology Honors Progress Report Form to:  K. Major, Chair BHC
  - Forward Copy of Signed Prospectus to:  K. Major, Chair BHC
  - Forward Copy of Signed Prospectus to: AND K. Cooke, Director, University Honors College (UHC)

> **NOTE:** To advance in this program, the prospectus MUST BE COMPLETED by the END OF THE SECOND SEMESTER.

- Consider summer research programs: SURF, REU, etc.
**Semester 3**

- Enroll in 1-3 h Honors Thesis (BLY 499) or Directed Studies (BLY 494)

  - Months 1/2:
    - Finish data collection and analysis
    - Continue writing thesis document
    - Begin preparing talk/poster for Senior Honors Showcase

  - Months 3/4:
    - Finish draft written thesis document
    - Forward thesis to Advisory Committee for feedback

- Public Thesis Defense
  - Schedule thesis defense – TWO WEEKS BEFORE FINALS
    - Consult with Advisory Committee, Drs. K. Major, K. Cooke, D. Marshall, and Mr. A. Sells
    - SOMEONE FROM THE HONORS COLLEGE MUST BE PRESENT AT THE DEFENSE (UNIVERSITY HONORS)
  
  - Generate and distribute flyers
  - Reserve room and any needed audio/visual equipment

- Final Thesis
  - Advisory Committee Signs FINAL THESIS Document
  - Forward Copy of Signed Document to:  K. Major, Chair BHC
    
    **AND** K. Cooke, Director UHC