



# THE HONORS COLLEGE

## DEPARTMENTAL HONORS PROGRAM HANDBOOK

**2011-2012**

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**TOWSON UNIVERSITY**

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# DEPARTMENTAL HONORS PROGRAMS

## Eligibility

Certain majors on campus offer students the ability to complete a Departmental Honors Program. Students applying for admission to Departmental Honors programs are usually first term juniors who express an interest to the Departmental Honors Coordinator or Department Chair. Please contact the Departmental Honors Coordinator for the specific requirements of the program. The departments with Departmental Honors Programs are listed below with the Departmental Honors Coordinator.

### DEPARTMENT

#### College of Business and Economics

Economics

#### College of Fine Arts and Communication

Art

Electronic Media & Film

Mass Communications

#### College of Liberal Arts

English

Geography & Environmental Planning

Political Science

Psychology

Sociology

Anthropology

Criminal Justice

Women Studies

#### College of Science and Mathematics

Biological Sciences

Chemistry

Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences

### COORDINATOR

Dr. Matthew Chambers

Dr. Nancy Slegel

Dr. Greg Faller

Dr. Beth Haller

Dr. Florence Newman

Dr. Kent Barnes

Dr. Paul McCartney

Dr. Jonathan Mattanah

Dr. Whitney Garcia

Dr. Matt Durlington

Dr. Marion Cockey

Dr. Karen Dugger

Dr. Gail Gasparich

Dr. Ryan Sours

Dr. David Schaefer

## Requirements

Once accepted into a Departmental Honors Program, students must complete the requirements as listed in the catalog for their major. Most departments require that students complete 9 units in advanced content courses, directed readings and/or independent investigations, and an Honors Thesis, but some departments may offer other options, such as an extensive design project. The thesis/project culminates in a final presentation before a committee and the thesis advisor and is open to the public. **A completed, signed copy of the thesis/project approval form must be submitted to the Honors College no later than two weeks before graduation. Two UNBOUND, signed copies of the thesis and an electronic copy of the thesis (preferably emailed to [honors@towson.edu](mailto:honors@towson.edu)) must be delivered to the Honors College Office by the last day of the final exam period.** When the Honors College receives the thesis/project, the appropriate designation appears on your diploma and final transcript.



# DEPARTMENTAL HONORS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

## **Choosing a Topic and a Faculty Thesis Advisor**

Students should consider decisions regarding the selection of their faculty thesis advisor and a thesis topic carefully. Because of the preparation required to register for the thesis project, it is important to come to the process with a working idea of the topic. Previous academic course work, co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences will help to select a focused topic area, which can be studied in greater depth. Past academic activities, such as short papers and readings from a variety of courses, may help to determine a starting point. Building on previous work by using both the knowledge and interest already developed is recommended and encouraged. Begin with several possible topics in mind or with several possible approaches to one large topic area.

After topic ideas have been developed, students should meet with the Departmental Honors Coordinator to discuss an appropriate faculty thesis advisor. A faculty thesis advisor might be an instructor in a previous course or someone who has supervised an internship. The faculty thesis advisor must be qualified in the topic area and should have a significant interest in the field. The faculty thesis advisor must also be willing to work closely with you.

## **Applying for Departmental Honors**

An *Honors Thesis Committee and Proposal Approval Form* as well as an attached *Honors Thesis/Project Proposal* must be delivered to the Honors College Office when beginning your departmental honors program. An approval form is attached to the end of this handbook and available on the Honors College web site. A proposal for the Honors Thesis/Project should be attached to the form.

Most Honors Thesis Proposals are three to five pages, plus a bibliography. The proposal represents the product of a semester of carefully supervised analysis, reading, and research in either the Departmental Honors courses or the Directed Reading and Independent Investigation Courses. The faculty thesis advisor should be certain that the proposal is feasible in scope and appropriate to both ability and time constraints.

## **Honors Thesis Guidelines**

The Honors Thesis should follow the standard format including a title page, approval sheet, and consecutively numbered pages through the notes and bibliography. The thesis should follow the stylistic conventions of your discipline. This handbook provides samples of a title page and an approval sheet as well as the Honors Thesis format.

## Helping with Research

- *Library Resources:* Please visit Cook Library and the [Cook Library web site](#) for access to numerous scholarly resources. The library staff can help to familiarize students with the available resources to undertake their research.
- *Undergraduate Research Services:* The Office of University Research Services offers competitive grants to fund undergraduate research in all fields and to send students to professional meetings to report the outcomes of their scholarly activities. There is one deadline for Research Grants each semester and two deadlines for Travel Grants.

## Thesis Committee

The thesis committee is composed of the faculty thesis advisor and at least one additional faculty representative. Honors College students are required to have a representative from the Honors College on their committee. The members should be chosen in consultation with the faculty thesis advisor. Members of the committee are responsible for reading and responding to the thesis, evaluating the work, and attending the public presentation. At the end of the colloquium, the members must sign the two required copies of the thesis, which will be kept in the Special Collections and Archives of Cook Library.

## Honors Colloquium

The Honors Colloquium is a public presentation of the thesis project. The audience is composed of interested students, invited guests, the faculty thesis advisor and the thesis committee members. The advisor will introduce the student to the audience who will then give a brief (approximately 10-20 minute) synopsis of the work, followed by a discussion of the work by the audience.

Projects emphasizing the creative or performing arts, rather than traditional academic endeavors, must also include a public presentation. The nature of the project will dictate the type of presentation. This event should, however, build in time for the audience to ask questions or make comments.

## Finalizing your Thesis

Two UNBOUND, signed copies of the thesis and one electronic copy of the thesis (preferably by email to [honors@towson.edu](mailto:honors@towson.edu)) must be delivered to the Honors College Office by the last day of the final exam period. If the student can not meet this deadline, the student should withdraw from the thesis course before the official date to withdraw from classes. If the student does not withdraw and does not complete the requirements, they will receive an incomplete (I), and they will be given an opportunity to complete the project during the following semester.



# HONORS ELECTIVES

REQUIRED FOR HONORS COLLEGE STUDENTS ONLY

All Honors College students must complete 6 units of Honors Electives. The Honors Electives are designed to allow students maximum flexibility in designing a project or course of study most suitable to their academic needs and goals. All Honors Electives include a significant piece of writing (to be submitted to the Honors College upon completion) and a public presentation. Questions about the Honors Electives should be directed to the Honors College. Students may fulfill their Honors Electives requirement by completing 6 units from the following course options:

## **Departmental Honors Program**

### **Honors Independent Study/ Directed Readings/ Independent Investigations/ Internship**

Students who are interested in receiving Honors credit for a Departmental Independent Study, Directed Readings, Independent Investigations or Internship must also submit a proposal syllabus for the course to the Honors College no later than the last day of the Change of Schedule period. Students may use the Honors syllabus templates as a guide, and they should clearly state how the Honors course differs from a traditional Departmental Independent Study, Directed Reading, Independent Investigations or Internship. In order to obtain Honors College credit for any of these courses, students must work directly with a faculty member, submit a formal written component for the course to the Honors College, and complete a public presentation before their peers. Syllabus templates for the Honors Independent Study/ Directed Readings/ Independent Investigations/ Internship are available in the Honors College Student Handbook and on the Honors College Community Blackboard site.

### **Honors Credit for Study Abroad**

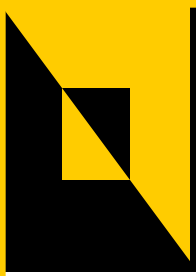
Students participating in short term study abroad courses may receive 3 units toward their Honors Electives if they complete an approved study abroad project. Honors students participating in a full semester (term) study abroad may receive 6 units toward their Honors Electives if they complete an approved study abroad project. ***Students participating in Honors College sponsored study abroad programs do not have to complete a separate project to receive Honors units.*** Questions about honors credit for study abroad should be directed to the Honors College.

### **Upper-Level Honors Seminars**

Honors students may complete an additional 6 units of upper-level Honors College seminars toward their honors course requirements. These courses have original topics that are based on the instructor's area of interest and incorporate independent writing projects and a public presentation as part of the course's culminating activities. These seminars may satisfy a General Education as well as major department requirement.

### **Honors Thesis / Creative Project**

Honors students may complete an honors thesis or creative project of their own design under the mentoring of a faculty member in their discipline and/or an Honors College faculty member. The Honors Thesis or Creative Project provides students with flexibility in designing a final honors experience that relates to their interests and career goals. Honors theses and creative projects result in a significant piece of writing submitted to the Honors College and a public presentation of the work. Questions about the Honors Thesis or Creative Project should be directed to the Honors College.



# NCHC PORTZ AWARDS

FOR HONORS COLLEGE STUDENTS ONLY

The National Collegiate Honors Council provides the following awards annually. As a member of NCHC, the Towson University Honors College is eligible to nominate its students for each award. For more information about the Portz Awards, please visit [www.nchchonors.org](http://www.nchchonors.org) or contact the Honors College at [honors@towson.edu](mailto:honors@towson.edu).

## **John and Edythe Portz Interdisciplinary Research Fellowship**

The National Collegiate Honors Council's *John and Edythe Portz Interdisciplinary Research Fellowship* provides students in good standing in honors colleges of NCHC member institutions support to conduct creative and innovative research that crosses boundaries. The fellowship program invites applications from individuals who wish to undertake cross-disciplinary research or from a team of two students from different disciplines who propose a single collaborative project. The project will be funded for a period of up to 15 months with the expectation that upon its completion the Fellowship recipient will make a presentation of the research at the annual NCHC conference. Fellowship support will be in an amount between \$5,000 and \$7,000. NCHC expects to award up to 2 Portz fellowships per year.

The Portz Fellowship application is available at [www.nchchonors.org](http://www.nchchonors.org). Applications and supporting materials must be submitted electronically to [honors@towson.edu](mailto:honors@towson.edu) by **January 15**. Students will be notified of the results by April 1. The project must be completed no later than August 31 of the following year. Fellows are required to submit two progress reports, the first on November 1 of the granting year, and the second on April 1 of the following year.

## **John and Edythe Portz Scholars**

NCHC institutional members are invited to nominate one paper per year written by an undergraduate Honors College student for the Portz Scholars competition. The Portz Scholars are featured at a plenary session at the annual National Collegiate Honors Conference. In addition, each Portz Scholar receives a \$250.00 stipend. The NCHC Portz Fund Committee will pay the Scholar's conference registration fees, and the Honors College agrees to make a good faith effort to defray travel expenses of the Portz Scholar.

Portz Scholar applications must be submitted electronically to [honors@towson.edu](mailto:honors@towson.edu) by **May 15**. The application must include a copy of the student's thesis or research paper, a one-page abstract, and a letter of recommendation by the thesis or research advisor.

## APPENDICES

Honors Thesis Committee and  
Proposal Approval Form

Honors Thesis Colloquium  
Announcement Form

Sample Honors Thesis Title Page

Sample Honors Thesis Approval Page

Honors Thesis Checklist

**Towson University**  
**Honors Thesis Committee and Proposal Approval Form**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Units completed at TU: \_\_\_\_\_ GPA in Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Overall GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Date of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Date of Thesis Presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Major at Towson: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Thesis Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name Signature

Faculty Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name Signature

Honors College Representative (Required for Honors College students only):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name Signature

Department Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name Signature

Dean, Honors College: Dr. Joseph McGinn \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**NOTE: It is the responsibility of the student to obtain all signatures *before beginning the proposed project.***

Attach a copy of your honors thesis proposal and deliver to Honors College Office:

Honors College  
Towson University  
302 Stephens Hall  
8000 York Road  
Towson, MD 21252

**Towson University**

**Honors Thesis Colloquium Announcement Form**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department / Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Thesis Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name Signature

Please submit this form to the Honors College at least two weeks before your presentation. Your presentation should be scheduled at least two weeks before you graduate.

Honors College  
Towson University  
302 Stephens Hall  
8000 York Road  
Towson, MD 21252

**Sample Title Page**

TITLE OF THESIS TYPED IN CAPITAL LETTERS  
DOUBLE SPACED AND CENTERED

by

(Student Name)

An Honors Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of

Towson University

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the degree

Bachelor of (Arts / Sciences) with Honors

(Date)

Towson University

# Sample Approval Sheet

## Towson University Honors Thesis Approval Sheet

**James Smith**  
**B.A., May 2002**

**Thesis Title:** (insert title)  
**Department:** Political Science  
**Specialization:** Law and Political Theory

### Required Work in Specialization:

1. Advanced Course or Seminar  
Political Science 486, Seminar: Law and Justice  
Professor: Jack Fruchtman, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science  
Date: Spring 2001
2. Honors Directed Reading:  
Political Science 498, Directed Readings in Political Science  
Professor: Jack Fruchtman, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science  
Date: Fall 2001
3. Honors Thesis:  
Political Science 499, Honors Thesis  
Professor: Jack Fruchtman, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science  
Date: Spring 2001
4. Honors Thesis Colloquium: Thesis Approved

Committee Signatures:

_____	_____
Thesis Advisor	Date
_____	_____
Faculty Representative	Date
_____	_____
Honors College Representative	Date
_____	_____
Dean, Honors College	Date

## Towson University

### Honors Thesis Checklist

This checklist is provided for the student's convenience. It *does not* have to be submitted to the Honors College.

- Submit completed Honors Thesis Committee and Proposal form along with thesis proposal (as you begin your departmental honors program)
- Submit completed Honors Thesis Colloquium Announcement to the Honors College (preferably at least two weeks before you graduate)
- Prepare signature page and ask committee to sign it at Honors Thesis Colloquium
- Review thesis for appropriate formatting according to discipline guidelines (for example, MLA, APA, Chicago Manual of Style, etc.)
  - 1-in. margins
  - 12-pt. font (preferably Times New Roman)
  - Correct line spacing (usually double-spacing)
  - Correct page numbering
  - Table of Contents included
  - Appropriate and consistent reference style in text
  - Correct reference style in bibliography
  - Correct format for headings and chapter titles
- Submit two paper copies of the thesis, complete with signature page, to the Honors College by the last day of the semester in which you plan to graduate
- Email a copy of the thesis to [honors@towson.edu](mailto:honors@towson.edu)