

# Honors Research

## U391 or U392

### What makes it Honors?

The student who applies for Honors work is expected to be highly motivated, self-directed, articulate, and perceptive. Correspondingly, the work undertaken for Honors credit should be more challenging than the usual work in undergraduate research. It should emphasize self directed learning and critical thinking, and allow ample time for interaction with the faculty member supervising the work and other professionals in the field.

In this type of work the intellectual maturation of the student is demonstrated by progressing to independent scholarship. The semester's work should provide the student with ideas and academic experiences that are not usually available to Philadelphia University students through existing courses. The student's role in this work will be more than gathering information or experimental data.

The outcome(s) or product(s) of an Honors experience must culminate in a report that offers evidence of the student's effort during the learning process. But more importantly, it must show that the student is capable of more than a superficial understanding of the research. The report and the final presentation to the Honors Committee should demonstrate the student's capacity to understand and synthesize the results of the semester's work into a complex whole.

### What makes it Research?

Research is a critical, focused, systematic investigation of a discrete problem in some field of knowledge through laboratory or studio research, archival or library research, computer programming/interfaces, etc. This usually involves validation of a hypothesis by observation or experimentation, and conceivably could encompass some intermediate stage of a larger project worked on by others. Students who wish to undertake a creative intellectual activity (e.g. writing a play or a collection of short stories) may ask for consideration of such activity as an acceptable substitute for research.

Research should extend learning into areas covered neither in the student's established curriculum nor the content of course taught by the supervising faculty. The topic of the research may vary depending upon the supervising faculty member's own research interests. Although clear objectives are set by the student, the project's outcomes are uncertain at the start. It is understood that the student will explore concepts and ideas that are of some value to other scholars with similar interests, as well as to that student. Knowledge of background material in the field of study and methods of conducting research are assumed. As a result, approval for Honors Research will usually only be granted to students who have completed at least 60 credits. A student may not register for more than 3 credits of Honors Research in any one term.

### Research Focus

Such work would meet one of the following criteria:

- 1) Contributes to the body of knowledge in a specific discipline
- 2) Solves a problem / problem-based project
- 3) Explores an innovation / use and assessment of an innovation
- 4) Examines the inclusion/ involvement of an underrepresented/ underserved population for that profession.
- 5) Examines the industry/ profession in a developing nation or region.

All of these lines of inquiry relate to the categories under development for the Upper Division honors curriculum: Research, Leadership, and Service.

## How is the proposal approved?

After consultation with the Honors Direct and the faculty member willing to supervise the intended work, a detailed proposal, and the appropriate portfolio or literature review is prepared by the student. The application form must be signed by the following individuals:

- 1) The student submitting the research proposal,
- 2) The supervising faculty member who is agreeing to supervise the proposed research,
- 3) The Academic Advisor and the Chairman/Dean who are approving the curricular substitution of the research credits, and
- 4) The Honors Director.

A copy of the approval form will be supplied to the student (to present during pre-registration), the faculty supervisor, and the student's academic advisor. The original will be kept by the Honors Director.

If the Honors work is to be done in the Spring semester, the proposal must be submitted to the Honors Director no later than November 1<sup>st</sup>. For Fall or Summer semester, the proposal must be submitted on, or before, April 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Director of the Honors program will schedule a mid-term review with the faculty member supervising the research to establish that adequate progress is being made toward completion of the project.

No student will be allowed to register for the CR/NC option for Honors Research.

## What should the proposal contain?

Several elements must be included in the format for an Honors Research proposal:

- 1) Cover page/abstract with appropriate signatures.
- 2) The rationale for the specific nature of the project, why the particular hypothesis/problem is being raised and why the selected method of research has been chosen. **(WHY?)**
- 3) Procedure intended for the research (fully annotated when necessary), including resources that will be used to carry out the project (major equipment, library holdings, computer software, materials) and necessary permission for their use. **(HOW?)**
- 4) Scope of the project (e.g. what should be accomplished during the term) **(HOW MUCH?)**
  - a. Weekly schedule (time line?) of intended work, and intermediate and final submission of the work. **(WHEN?)**
  - b. Weekly time commitment by the student to the intended work.
- 5) Anticipated outcome of the project: the nature of the final product (paper, oral exam, exhibition, etc.)
- 6) **\*\*How the process and product will be supervised and assessed by the supervising faculty member, including scheduled meeting times, what ongoing feedback the supervisor will provide, and what criterion will be used for the semester grade.**
- 7) Complete bibliography of references consulted in compilation of the proposal and to be consulted by the student during the research.  
**\*\*An oral presentation of the completer work at end of term is suggested in addition to any other means of evaluation required by the supervising faculty member.**

**Honors Research Proposal  
U391 or U392**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Term Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Term \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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Research Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Term for Intended research \_\_\_\_\_ Research Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature below)

Curricular Substitution: \_\_\_\_\_  
(approval below)

**Abstract of Intended Work:** (type / attach additional pages for remainder of proposal)

**Deadlines:**

April 1 for Fall registration

November 1 for Spring registration

April 1 for Summer Registration

**Signatures:**

Student (proposal submission): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Research Supervisor (project approval): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Advisor (curricular substitution): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair/Dean (curricular substitution): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Honors Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*If approved, a copy of this approval form will be supplied to the student to present during registration, a copy will be sent to the student's academic advisor, and the original will be retained by the Director of the Honors Program.*