Honors Independent Study/ Research
HONOR 391 or HONOR 392

What makes it Honors?
Honors students pursuing this credit option are 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.

- The desired outcome: Students will be able to pursue research questions using appropriate resources and articulate conclusions persuasively across disciplines.
- The core value addressed in this activity is to facilitate collaborative opportunities that promote the curiosity to pursue your own questions.

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/interfacing, 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.

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 research/ question honors outcome.
How is the proposal approved?

After consultation with the Honors Director and the faculty member willing to supervise the intended work, a detailed proposal is prepared by the student. The application 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 Dean who are approving the curricular substitution of the research credits,
4) The Honors Director, and
5) The Manager of Operations in the College that hosts the course offering.

The proposal must be submitted to the Honors Director before the end of the previous semester the work is to commence.

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 Study/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 study/research has been chosen. (WHY?)
3) Procedure intended for the study/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 completed work at end of term is suggested in addition to any other means of evaluation required by the supervising faculty member.
Honors Independent Study/ Research Proposal
HON 391 or HON 392

Name: ______________________________________ Major:____________________________________

ID#__________________ Semester __________

Research Topic:_________________________________________

Semester for Intended research __________

Research Supervisor______________________ Faculty Signature:____________________________

Curricular Substitution:____________________________________________________

(approval below)

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

Signatures:
Student (proposal submission): ___________________________ Date:_____

Research Supervisor (project approval): _______________________ Date:_____

Academic Advisor (curricular substitution):_______________________ Date:_____

Dean (curricular substitution):_______________________________ Date:_____

Honors Director:_________________________________________ Date:_____

College Manager of Operations: _____________________________ 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.