Graduating with Honors Research Distinction:
Honors Thesis Requirements in Arts and Sciences

1. Honors students in good standing may complete a thesis (or creative project) and graduate with honors research distinction.

2. Students who do not have honors status may be eligible to complete a thesis project and graduate with research distinction. (undergraduateresearch.osu.edu/thesis)

3. At the time of graduation, students must have a minimum overall GPA of 3.4 on at least 60 graded Ohio State credit hours to graduate with honors research distinction.

4. The Department of Mathematics has different requirements from those listed below (graduate-level course work taken in addition to the approved major program; contact the math department for details).

5. A student may complete a thesis within his/her major or in other disciplines, provided the student has a tenure-track faculty member serving as his/her project advisor. Lecturers and others who do not have tenure-track faculty status may not serve as the designated project advisor.

6. The academic unit that sets and enforces the thesis requirements will be the faculty project advisor’s home department (or school). Check with each academic unit for details. If the advisor’s home department does not offer undergraduate courses, the requirements of the student’s major apply.

7. To qualify for graduation with honors research distinction, the student must submit an Honors Thesis Application to the Arts and Sciences (ASC) Honors Office. The proposal form must be signed by the faculty project advisor; this ensures that all parties have a common understanding of the proposed plan to complete a thesis for a given graduation deadline. The Honors Thesis Application must be approved by the ASC Honors Office before the student registers for 4999H course work and begins the research.

8. The Honors Thesis Application must be turned in to the ASC Honors Office at least two semesters before graduation.

9. Students must register for at least 4 research thesis semester credits, using course number 4999H. (Note: Psychology requires enrollment in a 4999H course sequence.)

10. Under semesters, course number 4998H will designate general honors undergraduate research credits, and course number 4999H will designate honors research thesis credits. (Other options may include 2998H/2999H and 3998H/3999H, depending on the academic unit.) Students must register for at least 4 honors research thesis semester credits (typically 4999H).

11. Acceptable standards for the written paper of the research thesis or project will be determined by the academic unit. Note that in some departments in which the thesis is a
11. Some written component is also required.

12. A satisfactory oral defense of the thesis or project is required. The oral defense will last one hour and will be evaluated by a committee of three faculty members, including one tenure-track faculty member from another department. The chair of the oral defense committee is the faculty project advisor. The third committee member may be regular faculty or auxiliary faculty. For definitions of other faculty appointments, see trustees.osu.edu/rules5/ru5-19.php.

13. A written document confirming successful defense of the thesis or project will be submitted by the thesis committee chair to the ASC Honors Office. Documentation of any authorized exceptions to the requirements for graduating with honors research distinction also must be provided by the thesis committee chair to the ASC Honors Office.

14. For the transcript designation, a student who completes a thesis in his/her major will graduate with honors research distinction in [the major]. Students who complete approved interdisciplinary research may substitute the interdisciplinary field for the major in the transcript designation. Others will simply graduate with honors research distinction.

15. The approved thesis or project written component will be submitted to the Ohio State Knowledge Bank. If confidentiality is desired, the thesis can be embargoed when it is submitted. Instructions for submissions of Undergraduate Research Theses to the Knowledge Bank are available at http://go.osu.edu/kb-honors-instructions.

OTHER INFORMATION:

Links to Web sites of Departments with Other Requirements

Mathematics: www.math.osu.edu/counseling/honors.html

Psychology: undergrad psy.ohio-state.edu/html/honors.php

Work on the Project

The faculty project advisor is responsible for overseeing the entire project. The student and faculty member should establish mutually acceptable guidelines for frequency of consultation, submission of preliminary drafts, and deadlines for submitting work. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in termination of the project.

If the faculty member will be absent during any part of the project, s/he must appoint another faculty member to supervise the project during that period, and the ASC Honors Office should be informed of this appointment. If the student will be conducting research off campus, the student and faculty member should devise mutually acceptable guidelines for maintaining contact and reporting progress. In some cases, this might include the designation of an "on-site" advisor, and the ASC Honors Office should be informed of these arrangements. The project advisor also
should inform the student if it appears that his/her research will require approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for human subjects research or approval of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (ILACUC) for animal subjects research.

Completion of the Thesis and Oral Defense

If it appears that the work, while satisfactory, will not be of such superior quality to qualify for graduation with honors research distinction, the student and faculty member may agree to continue the project as regular independent study or to terminate the project. The ASC Honors Office must be notified of the decision not to complete the project for graduation with honors research distinction. If the project is not completed, the faculty advisor may still judge that sufficient work has done to merit a grade of "S" (or, in the case of Psychology, a passing letter grade) in the 4999H course hours.

In most cases, completion of the thesis and oral examination will take place during the semester in which the student graduates, but earlier dates are acceptable in most departments. When the faculty member determines that the project is complete, s/he will convene a three-member examination committee, as noted above. The examination must include a one-hour oral defense. All three members of the committee must be present at the oral examination (video-conferencing is allowed if necessary).

The faculty member should inform the student well in advance of specific departmental requirements with regard to written examinations, major area or course work requirements, and his/her expectations for the oral examination. While there is no single format which would do justice to all disciplines, the ASC Honors Committee encourages examining committees to broaden the scope of the examination beyond a simple review of the thesis. In this manner, the integrity and rigor of the examination process will be maintained and enhanced.

After satisfactory completion of the oral examination, the examining committee will certify the student as qualifying for graduation with honors research distinction. The certification form must be returned by a specified date (usually several weeks before the end of the final semester) to the ASC Honors Office.

Final Copy and Title Page of the Thesis

Deadline: The thesis must be submitted electronically to the University Libraries' Knowledge Bank no later than the last day of final examination week of the semester in which the student will graduate.

Manuscript Format: The ASC Honors Office does not require any particular manuscript format and leaves that decision to the project advisor, who is familiar with the practices of the discipline.
Title Page: The title page for the honors thesis should follow the example below:

Religious Pilgrimage in Medieval England: 1100-1300

Honors Research Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for graduation
“with Honors Research Distinction in Medieval and Renaissance Studies” in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio State University

by
Jane Doe

The Ohio State University
June 2011

Project Advisor: Professor John Smith, Department of History

NOTE: Students pursuing graduation with honors research distinction by completing a thesis in an area outside the major field should not include the area of distinction on the title page. Using the example above, if the student was not majoring in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, she would have written, “Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for graduation with Honors Research Distinction in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio State University.”

Graduation

Candidates for graduation with honors research distinction still must submit the standard Application for Baccalaureate Degree. This application should be submitted through an appointment with an honors counselor in the ASC Honors Office one semester prior to the expected date of graduation.

Graduation applications are available in the ASC Honors Office. More information about applying to graduate may be found online at aschonors.osu.edu/graduation.

Candidates who file a graduation application with the ASC Honors Office and complete all requirements for the Honors Thesis will have the appropriate designation inscribed on the diploma.

Any questions should be directed to Aurelia Kubayanda, Honors Thesis Coordinator (tel. 292-5104, kubayanda.1@osu.edu) or to any honors counselor in the ASC Honors Office, 207 Enarson Hall, 154 West 12th Avenue. The Honors Thesis Application as well as further information and a list of Frequently Asked Questions can also be found on the ASC Honors Program web site at aschonors.osu.edu/research