

UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

Title of Proposal - Must begin with Department Abbreviation:

Change Departmental Honors to Departmental Thesis

Check One: [X] Full Proposal or [] Information Item

Effective Date for Curricular Offering: Fall 2009

FROM: University Honors (Dr. Greg O'Dea) & Departmental Honors Committee (Dr. Steve Kuhn) 4577
(proposal originator: include spokesperson's name, department, office number, telephone, e-mail)

Does this require new resources from the originating department or other department? No
Please attach explanation if yes.

Faculty of the originating department approved this proposal on 1/30/08 (date),
by a vote of 14 aye votes; 0 nay votes; 0 abstentions; 2 eligible voting members absent

The following have examined this proposal:

Dept Head/Director: Stephen Kuhn (printed name) [Signature] approve neutral disapprove*
DHON Chair

College Curriculum Committee Date: Vote: Signature of Chair:

Spokespersons for Affected Departments:

(name, department, date) signature approve neutral disapprove*

(name, department, date) signature approve neutral disapprove*

(name, department, date) signature approve neutral disapprove*

(name, department, date) signature approve neutral disapprove*

Dean/Director: [Signature] Greg O'Dea signature approve neutral disapprove*

University Registrar: Linda Orth (printed name) [Signature] Comments:

Provost: Phil Oldham (printed name) [Signature] approve neutral disapprove*

*Those who disapprove may attach an explanation

Table with 2 columns: Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate. Rows include: ACTIONS on this proposal, Date the proposal was considered, Vote of the body, Accepted as information item, Approved as submitted, Approved with amendments, Signature of Chair.

Rationale for Change from Departmental Honors to Departmental Thesis

1. Under the current system, all students who present proposals that are accepted for work toward the designation of “Departmental Honors” are registered for a course titled “Departmental Honors” in their major department. If the student fails to complete the project or completes the project but fails to earn “Departmental Honors,” the course “Departmental Honors” is still listed on the student’s transcript even though the student did NOT earn Departmental Honors. This problem would not exist with this change to the Departmental Thesis.
2. If in the above circumstances, the Project Director determines that the student has completed enough work to qualify for individual research project credit, substantial paperwork must be completed to convert the project from Departmental Honors credit to Individual Studies credit. This paperwork and conversion process would be unnecessary with the change to “Departmental Thesis” because the award of “Departmental Honors” would be separate from grading of the Departmental Thesis.
3. In the past, Project Directors have not had very consistent guidelines for how to grade Departmental Honors project – despite the fact that the quality of these projects has varied over time. The guidelines provided with the new Departmental Thesis offer Project Directors more guidance. It should be noted, however, that these guidelines are not mandates for grading, but merely suggestions to help provide more consistency in the grading process.

IX. Departmental Thesis Course 495R

495R is the course in which the candidate works with his or her Project Director while completing the project approved by the DHON Committee. As soon as the candidate receives approval of the proposal from the DHON Committee, he or she should contact the major department to make sure an appropriate course section of 495 has been created, listing the Project Director as the instructor.

Normally, the two 495s are completed during each of the last two consecutive semesters before graduation, and usually for two credit hours each term. There are some notable exceptions however:

- Students may elect to take only one credit hour of 495 one semester and then three hours the other, as long as together the two courses constitute four total hours.
- Students who intend to be exceptionally busy their last semester at UTC, such as those enrolled in off-campus teacher training, may elect to begin their first 495 during the third term before graduation, i.e., the second semester of their Junior year or a summer term between the Junior and Senior years. For this to work, however, departmental honors candidates will have to submit their proposals to the DHON Committee early, usually (but not always) in the first semester of the Junior year.
- Occasionally, students who have already completed one 495 may find it necessary to defer their graduation date and the completion of their second 495. Assuming the student is in good standing, and that the DHON Committee Chair is notified in writing of this development, the deferral will usually be granted. It should be noted that the DHON Committee merely approves or denies the request for a third semester extension of the Departmental Thesis. The DHON Committee does not have to approve the new graduation date.

Please note, however, that students permitted to pursue a Departmental Thesis must enroll in 495R during two consecutive semesters. If the candidate's work is judged satisfactory at the conclusion of the first semester of 495, he or she should receive a grade of IP (in progress) in that first semester and continue in the Departmental Thesis course 495R for the last semester.

Students must be registered in appropriate sections of 495R to correspond with the project director awarding the letter grade. Except in extenuating circumstances, students should register for all hours of 495R with the same project director.

Following the candidate's submission of final copies of the thesis, the departmental examination itself, a letter grade is assigned by the Project Director, designated projects are presented for acceptance by the DHON Committee and the Faculty Senate. The student then receives four hours of credit for 495R with the assigned grade.

All students completing the 495R, Departmental Thesis, may not necessarily be awarded departmental honors. Departmental Honors is based upon a successful project and defense. (As the Grade Guidelines below articulate, only students earning a grade of A on their Departmental Theses will qualify for Departmental Honors). Enrolling in 495R for the required number of hours does not automatically award students Departmental Honors status.

Students not successfully completing the Departmental Thesis may be awarded a letter grade for the course but will not receive the Honors designation on their academic record.

Grade Guidelines for Departmental Thesis Directors:

A — is given for work of distinctly superior quality and quantity accompanied by unusual evidence of enthusiasm, initiative, thoroughness and originality. A grade of A represents outstanding research combined with an excellent written project as well as superior performance on the oral examination. Only students who earn a grade of A on the Departmental Thesis may qualify for Departmental Honors. Students who are not awarded Departmental Honors by their examination committees may still earn a grade of A in rare instances where it can be justified by the student's Thesis Director.

B — is given for work showing the above qualities to a lesser extent. A grade of B indicates that the student has performed solid research combined with a very good written project, but did not offer superior performance on the oral examination. Students who earn a grade of B on the Departmental Thesis will not earn Departmental Honors.

C — represents fulfillment of the minimum essentials of the course. A grade of C represents a minimum level of research combined with a written project. A grade C occurs in situations in which the project is of a level that is not presentable for oral examination. Students who earn a grade of C on the Departmental Thesis will not earn Departmental Honors.

D — represents a passing grade to be given only in rare cases.

F — indicates unqualified failure.

IP — is used as an interim grade to indicate work in progress requiring more than the normal limitations of a semester. It has a one-year limitation for removal. The instructor will determine the IP designation in the first semester or term. A student may not register for additional 495R courses if he or she has earned two incomplete or in-progress (I or IP) grades.

W — indicates official withdrawal from one or more classes after the first two weeks of classes and up to the last six class weeks before the final examinations. Comparable deadlines apply to each of the summer terms.

Should a student who has made satisfactory progress not wish to complete his or her project, a letter grade instead of IP will be assigned by the Project Director at the end of the first semester and the student will be withdrawn from consideration for Departmental Honors. If, by the end of the first semester of 495R, the student has not made progress deemed satisfactory by the Project Director and the DHON Committee, he or she will receive an appropriate grade and not be allowed to re-register for a second semester of the Departmental Thesis course 495R. The student does, however, have the right to appeal. (See *Student Handbook* for procedure.) In cases involving students who have made unsatisfactory progress towards the Departmental Thesis, it is recommended that the student be given a failing grade for the course.

Departmental Honors

The Departmental Honors Program allows exceptional students to receive special recognition for their academic achievements. Departmental Honors is bestowed upon students who have maintained high academic standards in their course work, completed an acceptable two-semester, four-hour Departmental Thesis, and passed an oral examination. Graduation with Departmental Honors is recorded on the academic record and on the diploma. The Departmental Thesis (and related research) allows each honors candidate to deepen his/her knowledge and increase his/her skills in a particular discipline. Typical Departmental Thesis projects include original research or literary analysis, scientific experimentation, analytical computer modeling, or artistic expression. Admission to the Departmental Thesis program requires an overall grade point average of 3.2 and a grade point average of 3.5 in the major field of study. Any student with an overall grade point average of 3.5 and a grade point average of 3.75 in the major through the next-to-last semester before graduation may become a candidate for highest honors.

An application for Departmental Thesis is usually made during the third semester before graduation. Forms and a full accounting of procedures and policies can be found in the current Departmental Honors Handbook, obtainable from the Director of University Honors, 202 Guerry Hall, or on line at www.utc.edu/Administration/DepartmentalHonors/DHONManual.pdf

- Submit two finished copies of the completed thesis, with all the necessary signatures, to the UHON Program Faculty Assistant Director no later than two weeks prior to the last day of classes in the term in which second 495R is registered. (See Section XVI for details on the format of the paper.)
- Contact your DHON Committee Liaison, the Director or Faculty Assistant Director of the UHON program, or the Chair of the DHON Committee to clarify any DHON recommendations or project procedures. All students registered for 495R should be able to contact the DHON Committee Liaison, the Director or Faculty Assistant Director of the UHON program, or the Chair of the DHON Committee via the Communications feature on Blackboard since all 495R students are part of the DHON Blackboard Community.

IX. Departmental Honors Course 495R

OLD VERSION

495R is the course in which the candidate works with his or her Project Director while completing the project approved by the DHON Committee. As soon as the candidate receives approval of the proposal from the DHON Committee, he or she should contact the major department to make sure an appropriate course section of 495 has been created, listing the Project Director as the instructor.

Normally, the two 495s are completed during each of the last two consecutive semesters before graduation, and usually for two credit hours each term. There are some notable exceptions however:

- Students may elect to take only one credit hour of 495 one semester and then three hours the other, as long as together the two courses constitute four total hours.
- Students who intend to be exceptionally busy their last semester at UTC, such as those enrolled in off-campus teacher training, may elect to begin their first 495 during the third term before graduation, i.e., the second semester of their Junior year or a summer term between the Junior and Senior years. For this to work, however, departmental honors candidates will have to submit their proposals to the DHON Committee early, usually (but not always) in the first semester of the Junior year.
- Occasionally, students who have already completed one 495 may find it necessary to defer their graduation date and the completion of their second 495. Assuming the student is in good standing, and that the DHON Committee Chair is notified in writing of this development, the deferral will usually be granted. Please note, however, that students accepted into Departmental Honors must enroll in 495R during two consecutive semesters.

If the candidate's work is judged satisfactory at the conclusion of the first 495, he or she receives either a grade of IP (in progress) or a letter grade (the Project Director's option) and continues in departmental honors course 495R for the last semester.

Following the candidate's submission of final copies of the thesis, the departmental examination itself, and acceptance by the DHON Committee and the Faculty Senate, a letter grade is assigned by the Project Director. The student then receives four hours of credit for 495R with the assigned grade or, if the Project Director has already given a grade for the student's first term of 495R, the grade assigned for the second term of 495R. Should a student who has made satisfactory progress not wish to complete his or her project, a letter grade instead of IP will be assigned by the Project Director at the end of the first semester and the student will be withdrawn from departmental honors. If, by the end of the first semester of 495R, the student has not made progress deemed

satisfactory by the Project Director and the DHON Committee, he or she will receive an appropriate grade and not be allowed to re-register for departmental honors course 495R. The student does, however, have the right to appeal. (See *Student Handbook* for procedure.). In cases involving students who have made unsatisfactory progress towards Departmental Honors, any 495 course may be converted to a 497R or a 498R. This decision is reserved for Department Heads only, and is made possible by a memo from the head to the Records Office.

X. Honors Project Guidelines

In the past, students from all degree-granting colleges and schools have submitted projects in a wide variety of disciplines and areas of creative endeavor. Each project attests to the willingness of the student to go beyond the learning environment of the classroom and to assume the responsibilities associated with a commitment to scholarship and creative enterprise. Copies of past projects are available in the permanent collection of the Lupton Library.

A project may develop as a natural extension of the studies the student has undertaken in the major discipline. The student may initiate a project to explore ideas discovered in a course, or a laboratory, or a studio, or even in a chance encounter between the student and a faculty member.

Typically the project will take the form of a thesis, an extended essay that explains the student's work in a specific area of inquiry. The project may, however, have as its goal a designated activity in the fine arts—a recital, exhibition, or the like.

In any event, the project will always have a substantial written component. Written work for the honors project should conform to conventions of scholarly writing for the discipline in which the student is working, though in all cases the paper should be written so that a educated person outside the discipline can understand it. Especially technical jargon should either be avoided or well explained.

Each manuscript prepared for review by the examining committee should adhere to the following specifications:

- it must be printed on 8 1/2 by 11 white paper,
- all corrections should be neat and infrequent,
- all margins must be between 1 and 1.5 inches wide,
- the title page should conform to the model given in Appendix B, and
- it must include a one page abstract of the project written for an educated lay audience.

Note: these requirements are only for the copies of the paper submitted to members of the examining committee. The two finished copies of the thesis eventually submitted to the UHON Program Director after the examination must adhere to the stricter requirements outlined in Section XVI.

Pi Mu Epsilon (mathematics)
 Pi Sigma Alpha (political science)
 Psi Chi (psychology)
 Scabbard and Blade (military science)
 Sigma Delta Pi (Spanish)
 Sigma Iota Epsilon (business management)
 Sigma Pi Sigma (physics)
 Sigma Theta Tau (nursing)
 Sigma Xi (sciences)
 Tau Beta Pi (engineering)
 Upsilon Pi Epsilon (computer science)

Departmental Honors

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Application for departmental honors is usually made during the third semester before graduation. Forms and a full accounting of procedures and policies can be found in the current Departmental Honors Handbook, obtainable from the Director of University Honors, 202 Guerry Hall, or on line at www.utc.edu/Administration/DepartmentalHonors/.

Enrolling in Graduate Courses

A senior who is within 30 credit hours of completing requirements for the bachelor's degree at The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga may apply for admission to graduate courses if the applicant has an institutional cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (B) or higher and is recommended by the head of his or her major department. Subject to the approval of the director of the Graduate School, a student may earn up to nine credit hours of graduate credit prior to completing the bachelor's degree. Such approval must be obtained each semester by completing the special application form which is available in the Graduate School Office. Courses taken for graduate credit may not be applied toward an undergraduate degree.