Proposal Due: _______________________

Honors Research Symposium (HRS) Presentation & Senior Project Due: _______________________

Priorities:
The Honors College Senior Project Guide

Why Research?

Research is an exciting avenue for learning that reaches beyond the traditional classroom. In doing research, Honors students pursue their academic interests at a deeper level, creating or contributing new knowledge in their major, and cultivating relationships with faculty mentors. Research also helps Honors students develop the communication and critical thinking skills necessary for graduate school and professional employment.

Honors and Research

The Honors Senior Project completes your Honors degree. The project is a prized academic achievement, the product of a great amount of research, analysis and writing. While the project will serve as a remarkable personal achievement, it will also provide evidence—to graduate school admissions committees, scholarship review boards, and prospective employers—that Honors student not only have the academic capability, but also the intellectual maturity to pursue independent academic endeavors.

Research opportunities exist in all fields of study at UT Arlington. Honors students work under the mentorship of full-time faculty, who are committed to the success of emerging researchers.

Campus Research Opportunities

The following programs connect mentoring professors with undergraduate students. Honors students are encouraged to study the following programs, as each is a potential vehicle to complete the Honors Senior Project. Some programs offer financial assistance as well (check the websites for more information).

UTTER (Undergraduate Training the Theoretical Ecology Research)
http://www.uta.edu/math/utter/application

The UTTER (Undergraduate Training in Theoretical Ecology Research) Program in the Departments of Mathematics and Biology at the University of Texas at Arlington invites qualified undergraduates to apply for UTTER scholarships. Each scholarship provides two years of financial support for a total of $11,400. Undergraduates with at least two years remaining to complete their B.S. degree will be considered. Those from groups who are underrepresented in the sciences are especially encouraged to apply.

McNair Scholars Program
http://www.uta.edu/soar/mcnair/services.php

The McNair Scholars Program provides opportunities to low-income, first-generation students, or those from underrepresented groups to prepare for future graduate study culminating in the PhD. Through its seminars, research institute, summer research internship, GRE preparation, ongoing guidance in the graduate school application process, and travel (to conferences, graduate fairs and prospective graduate programs), the McNair Program informs, strengthens, and encourages talented undergraduates to transcend the challenges posed by economic background, level of parental education, or minority status to enter the professoriate and engage in a life of research and teaching.

Undergraduate Research Fellowships
http://www.uta.edu/honors/funding/urf/

Undergraduate Research Fellowships (URFs) provide select Honors undergraduate students with hands-on research during the summer in any discipline. Students work under faculty mentors to gain important research skills and contribute to projects that are a vital part of the academic experience.
What is the Honors College Senior Project?

Individual departments have different expectations for completing the Honors Senior Project; thus, depending on your major, there are up to five options available to you. The unifying thread for all Honors Senior Projects is that they contribute to the development of disciplinary knowledge or practice in new ways, and that they result in a piece of substantive written work that addresses a disciplinary problem and documents the student’s learning process and outcomes.

What are the Options?

1. Thesis / Creative Project / Group Project
   The thesis/creative project offers students the opportunity to complete sustained original research or creative activity in their major field. Students in any major may select the thesis option; however, the group project is limited to engineering majors and the creative project is limited to fine arts majors.

2. Internship
   Students work with a faculty mentor to produce a detailed, substantive written project that focuses on a disciplinary problem and documents how the internship helped them in addressing and/or understanding the problem.

3. Service Learning
   Students work with a faculty mentor to produce a detailed, substantive written project that focuses on a disciplinary problem and documents how the community service learning project helped them in addressing and/or understanding the problem.

4. Study Abroad
   Students work with their major advisor to identify appropriate courses that can be applied to their degree and normally spend one or two semesters abroad (fall and/or spring only for senior projects). These students also work with a UTA faculty mentor to produce a detailed, substantive written project that focuses on a disciplinary problem and documents how the study abroad experience helped them in addressing and/or understanding the problem.

What is the best option?

Check which options are available in your major discipline and then think about which option(s) will serve your needs the best.

- “I want to study something further” (Thesis option)
- “I need to learn real-world applications” (Internship or Service Learning option)
- “This organization fascinates me and I want to learn more” (Service Learning or Internship option)
- “I want to produce a play” (Creative Project option)
- “I want to participate in my mentor’s ongoing research” (Thesis option)
Honors College Senior Project

Departmental Options

The following departmental options for the Honors Senior Project are subject to change. Please confirm with an Honors advisor prior to submitting your proposal.

School of Architecture – Majors are required to do the thesis or creative activity option.

College of Business – Majors may choose from the thesis, study abroad, internship or service learning.

College of Education – All majors, except those below, are required to do the thesis option.
   Curriculum and Instruction – Thesis, internship*
   Kinesiology – Thesis, study abroad, internship, or service learning*

College of Engineering – All majors may choose the thesis, enhanced group project, study abroad, internship or service learning.

College of Liberal Arts – See your major below for options.
   Anthropology – All majors are required to do the thesis option
   Art and Art History – Thesis, creative activity, study abroad, or internship
   Communications – Thesis, study abroad, service learning or internship
   Criminology and Criminal Justice – All majors are required to do the thesis option.
   English – Thesis, study abroad, service learning or internship*
   History – All majors are required to do the thesis option.
   Linguistics – All majors may choose either the thesis or service learning.
   Modern Languages – Thesis and study abroad
   Music – Thesis, creative activity, study abroad, service learning or internship
   Philosophy – All majors are required to do the thesis option
   Political Science – All majors are required to do the thesis option
   Sociology – All majors are required to do the thesis option
   Theatre – Thesis, creative activity, study abroad or internship

School of Nursing – Majors may choose the thesis, internship or service learning.

College of Science – See your major below for options.
   Biology – All majors are required to do the thesis option.
   Chemistry and Biochemistry – All majors are required to do the thesis option.
   Geology – All majors may choose either the thesis or study abroad.
   Mathematics – All majors may choose the thesis or study abroad (must be department-approved)
   Physics – All majors are required to do the thesis.
   Psychology – All majors are required to do the thesis.

School of Social Work – Majors may choose the thesis, study abroad, internship or service learning.

School of Urban and Public Affairs (Interdisciplinary Studies) – All majors are required to do the thesis.
Selecting a Faculty Mentor

When approaching faculty, it is important to be clear, precise, and focused on your Senior Project topic. Be sure you study the research interests of the faculty member you are approaching. Visit their web pages, read their vitas which are often online, and be sure their research relates to your topic of interest as much as possible. Finally, be prepared if your first choice for mentor declines. You might even ask if he or she can recommend another faculty member. You generally get better results when you approach a faculty member and say, “Dr. Smith suggested that I ask you about the possibility of being a mentor for my Honors College Senior Project.”

Proven ideas on how to find faculty mentors:

- Talk to faculty with whom you have taken a class
- Visit faculty websites
- Ask your advisors and other faculty

Because the Honors Senior Project is the culmination and signature product of a student's Honors degree at the University of Texas at Arlington, only full-time UT Arlington faculty members are permitted to serve as mentors. Honors students cannot conduct their Honors Senior Project under the direct supervision of a faculty member at another university, professional school, or research institution.

Faculty Mentor and Student Relationship Expectations

You are responsible for the following:

- Keeping your faculty mentor informed about Honors College timelines and due dates
- Discussing with your mentor how you plan to accomplish your Senior Project
- Providing your mentor with the Senior Project template and discussing major-specific citation and writing styles
- Letting your mentor know that you will use the Writing Center as necessary
- Giving your mentor draft(s) of the written project for review and editing before submitting it to the Honors College

Your faculty mentor is responsible for the following:

- Helping you to focus your topic to something that you can handle given the timeframe and your research experience
- Discussing ethical considerations, such as whether or not you need IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval
- Giving suggestions on relevant bibliography materials
- Editing your rough drafts to ensure correct methodology, data presentation, and proper grammar and writing
- Signing the Senior Project Proposal and Senior Project Approval forms
The proposal should be specific, clear and succinct: what the student wishes to investigate, what research has been done on the subject, why the subject is worthy of investigation and what methodology will be used in the research.

**The proposal should be two to three pages (single-spaced), plus a preliminary bibliography.**

On the proposal form, identify which of the options you will use to complete your Senior Project. No matter which option you choose, your written proposal should have the following five sections:

**Statement of Problem or Research Question (a few sentences)**

Research begins with the identification of a disciplinary problem needing a solution, an unanswered question, or a claim needing proof. Specify the problem, question, theme, or claim to be investigated. Your research may be a deeper investigation of a past class project or may contribute to ongoing research of your mentor. If this is the case, you will craft your problem statement to consider the relevance of your contribution.

**Summary Review of Scholarship Relevant to the Project (a few paragraphs)**

Reviewing the literature that has already been published on your topic, briefly summarize what is already known about the problem, questions, or claim to be investigated. If you will be replicating a previous study, specify how and why your research will be different. You may wish to use Google Scholar for this.

**Significance of the Research (a few paragraphs)**

Indicate why your research is necessary and important (in other words, address the “so what?” question). Describe how it will contribute to the body of knowledge in your field or profession.

**Methodology (a few paragraphs)**

Indicate the manner in which the disciplinary problem, question, or claim to be investigated will be researched and why your method is appropriate. Your supervising professor will help you determine the best methodology for your project.

***If you have chosen the study abroad, service learning, or internship option, your methodology will have two parts. The first method will be the academic basis as stated in the paragraph above (this is the same type of methodology that is typically found in a thesis). The second part will be rooted in your work outside the university. Specifically, how you plan to make use of the community knowledge or the workplace experience in your research. If human subjects are part of your research, you may be required to go through the Institutional Research Board (IRB).***

**Preliminary Bibliography**

Attach a preliminary list of relevant scholarly sources as noted above in the *Summary Review* section. Please note that your thesis mentor may require an annotated bibliography and/or a prospectus of the project.

For the Senior Project proposal, students **should have no less than five sources**; more if possible.

***For internships and service learning, include the location and supervisor.***
FOR ENGINEERING MAJORS ONLY

The proposal should be specific, clear and succinct: what the student wishes to investigate, what research has been done on the subject, why the subject is worthy of investigation and what methodology will be used in the research.

The proposal should be two to three pages (single-spaced), plus a preliminary bibliography.

On the proposal form, identify which of the options you will use to complete your Senior Project. No matter which option you choose, your written proposal should have the following five sections:

Statement of Problem or Research Question (a few sentences)

Your research begins with the identification of a disciplinary problem needing a solution, an unanswered question, or a claim needing proof. Because the engineering Senior Project is a group effort, it is necessary to clarify precisely your individual contribution to the project. You must demonstrate that you have engaged with the project to a deeper level than your non-Honors classmates. Consider the question, “What makes my contribution worthy of Honors credit?” just as you have done for Honors contract courses. Consider the following topics:

- a more comprehensive search and analysis of the specialist literature;
- a consideration of the historical context of the problem your team sought to solve;
- an essay on the engineering/technical ramifications of your group project; and
- an excursus on other, broader applications your project might inspire in the real world;

Summary Review of Scholarship Relevant to the Project (a few paragraphs)

Briefly summarize what is already known about the problem you will be addressing. You may use past examples, plans, engineering diagrams or other appropriate scholarship. Many group projects are a prototype of a future model. If this is the case, remember that the prototype is still based on existing theories.

You might begin by using Google Scholar, a link to which may be found on the library homepage.

Significance

How will your individual contribution to the group project contribute to the overall topic? Describe how it will contribute to the body of knowledge in your field or profession.

Methodology (a few paragraphs)

Indicate the manner in which the problem, question, or claim to be investigated will be researched and why your methodology is appropriate. You should conceive of this value-added component as a supplement to the team project rather than a stand-alone thesis. Many students find it appropriate to include this component in narrative form as a final chapter of the thesis (introduction, literature review, methodology, and your narrative).

Preliminary Bibliography

Attach a preliminary list of relevant scholarly sources as noted above in the Summary Review section. For the Senior Project proposal, students should have no less than five sources; more if possible. Additionally, list the other students in your group and their individual responsibilities within the larger project.
Honors College Expectations for the Final Written Project

No matter which option you chose, the written portion of your Senior Project must follow the formatting traditions of the Honors thesis. This template is available at [www.uta.edu/honors/project/thesis/HonorsThesisTemplate.docx](http://www.uta.edu/honors/project/thesis/HonorsThesisTemplate.docx).

The template provides the formatting required (title page, table of contents, acknowledgements, abstract, margins, captions, illustrations, spacing, etc.). The template also provides a framework for organizing your writing. While you must follow specifics regarding the formatting, you may decide to organize your writing differently (e.g., having only four chapters instead of five, etc.). Any additions (such as graded assignments, blog entries, surveys, creative designs, etc.) that are not in the template itself must be contained in an appendix.

The writing style depends on the standards of your academic unit. Be sure to consult with your faculty mentor on what the appropriate citation style for your discipline is. There are writing guides available for all styles and a librarian can assist you on any specific questions. You can set an appointment by contacting the central library.

Make sure that your mentor reviews a draft of your Senior Project and that you make all necessary revisions. The initial draft you submit to your mentor must be done in time for the “final” draft to be submitted to the Honors College at the Honors Research Symposium (HRS).

Before Submitting

Keep in mind that the written component you submit to the Honors College is more than a class assignment. No less than the traditional senior theses submitted by students in other schools and colleges of the university, your submission will be a permanent record of your crowning achievement as an Honors student. All Honors Senior Projects are kept on file for consultation by future students who want to see an example of what constitutes an Honors-worthy Senior Project. For this reason alone, you should strive to make it the best presentation it can be, with careful attention to organization, writing, graphics, and overall presentation. The Honors College will review your submission carefully, and will return it to you for revision if it does not meet the College’s expectations with regard to format and production.

One of the functions of your faculty mentor is to ensure that your Honors submission is presentable, and you should not be shy about seeking his or her guidance in producing it. If your writing skills are in need of work, there are resources available to assist you (e.g., COMS 3302, the 1104 and 1105 courses in your major department, and the Writing Center). In some cases, it might be necessary to seek the services of a professional editor. In the end, it is the student’s responsibility to submit an acceptable product to earn the Honors degree.

Submitting Your Senior Project

The Senior Project is always due on the same day as the Honors Research Symposium (HRS) in the semester it is presented. Engineering students submit their final project on the last official day of classes, before final exams; however, students can always submit their project any time prior to the due date. Please ensure the following are completed before submission:

1. _____The Senior Project is in the Honors College template and the formatting is correct.
2. _____Ensure that the document is free of grammar, syntax, and spelling errors.
3. _____Your faculty mentor has signed-off on the Approval Form and that it is submitted with your Senior Project.
4. _____Use standard paper only and a binding clip. Do not submit the project in a binder, folder, etc.
5. _____Submit a hard-copy version of your Senior Project. Do not submit an electronic version.
Individual departments have up to four options for the Senior Project. Be sure you know what the options are in your major by checking the Honors College Senior Project Guide, website, or with an Honors advisor.

**Phase One – Determining Your Interests (Freshman / Sophomores):**

- Attend the Senior Project Seminars
- Familiarize yourself with the Senior Project options in your major
- Think about possible topics based on your interests
- Contract courses for Honors credit to develop those interests
- Read your MavMail regularly

**Phase Two – Writing the Proposal (Sophomore / Junior Year):**

- Focus on your topic by doing background research (the topic must be relevant to your major)
- Get to know professors’ interests by talking to them and visiting their web pages
- Select a Faculty Mentor in your major department. Your mentor must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member (assistant, associate or full professor) or full-time lecturer. Adjunct professors, part-time instructors, and teaching assistants are not eligible to serve as Honors mentors. *Finding an appropriate mentor is the student's responsibility.* If you are unsure of a prospective mentor's status, ask him/her or an Honors advisor.
- Consider applying for the Honors College Undergraduate Research Fellowship program; or
- Consider applying for other research and leadership opportunities, such as the McNair Program, L-SAMP, and the Goolsby Leadership Academy.
- Read your MavMail regularly
- Follow the instructions in this packet to write and submit your Senior Project proposal

**Phase Three – Completing the Senior Project (Junior/Senior Year):**

- Enroll in the appropriate Honors Independent Study specified by your major department
- Complete the written work and have your mentor review it
- Submit an abstract for your Honors Research Symposium (HRS) presentation
- Have your faculty mentor sign the Approval form and submit it with your completed Senior Project
- Present your Senior Project at the Honors Research Symposium (HRS) in the fall or spring semester
- Graduate with your Honors degree!!!