

Honors College

Research in Honors Proposal Guidelines:

Research in Honors 686 (maximum of 3H credits) **
Prerequisite: Junior status; 9H credits

Doing Research in Honors can be a rewarding academic experience. (See the note following to distinguish between this course and a departmental research course.) Before you can register for this course, however, you must define the research project and the role you will play in a formal proposal. Therefore, you must begin preparing several weeks before you enroll in the course. **The course proposal and accompanying signature form must be complete by the time classes begin.** Here is what you must do **before** you register:

- 1. Select the research project you wish to work on.** Select a research project in your major field based on both the researcher and the topic. Usually undergraduate students do research with faculty whom they know from their classes, professional societies, or departmental advising.
- 2. Select a research director.** Faculty researchers take on undergraduate assistants on a voluntary basis, but many will be pleased to work with a serious student, often one whose work they know.

The research director's role. The research director oversees the project, which may also involve graduate students as well as other undergraduates. The director should explain the project, provide research guidelines and expectations, monitor your progress, evaluate your performance, and assign your grade. Once you have selected a project, set up a meeting with the research director to prepare the Research in Honors proposal, discuss responsibilities and expectations, and agree on the course requirements. S/he will help you determine what is a sufficient amount of work for the credits to be earned.

Note: If you are not able to select a project on your own, then consult with your faculty advisor or a member of the Honors College faculty.

- 3. Prepare a proposal.** Next, prepare a one- to two-page proposal that provides both an overview of the research project (written by the research director) and your expectations (written by you). This proposal is your opportunity to determine what specific things you want to learn or research experiences you most need. Therefore, do not treat this stage of preparation lightly. Be sure to clarify the mutual responsibilities. You both must agree on your research responsibilities, the methods for reporting your findings, the frequency of your meetings, and the expectations for the semester. The success of your experience ultimately depends on the quality of the proposal.

A. **Research Proposal (To be completed by research director)**

- * Describe the research project, including problems to be investigated; the nature of library research, experimentation, or fieldwork to be undertaken; and a tentative timetable for completion of project.
- * Outline the student's week-to-week responsibilities (read books, consult journals, conduct interviews, perform experiments, etc.).
- * Indicate how the student will be evaluated.
- * Describe the expected product (weekly journal, periodic short reports, final paper or summary) of the student's research activities.

B. Research Proposal (To be completed by the student)

- * Define your personal goals in working on this project. Why do you want to do this research and what do you expect to gain from it? Think about what you need to know and do to strengthen your candidacy for graduate school or a professional career. (The research director should be able to help you define your goals).

- 4. Give the Honors College assistant director a copy of your draft proposal for review.** Be sure to build enough time into the proposal writing process for revision.
- 5. Fill out the relevant signature form and attach it to your proposal.** All forms are available in the Honors College office, Garland 302. The signature form and proposal must be reviewed and signed by you, your research director, the department chair (if credits are to be applied to your major), and the Honors College director **before** you register for this course. All forms must be complete by the time classes begin.
- 6. Register for the course.** Approval of the proposal by the Honors College director is the final step before you can register. To register for Honors 686 “Research in Honors,” please provide your faculty research director’s name to the assistant director of the Honors College. The assistant director will assign your research director a number (which serves as a seminar number) in the course scheduling system, and will then have you complete an add form to register for the course.
- 7. Check your schedule in PAWS.** A few days after the add form is completed, check your schedule in PAWS to confirm that the course has been added correctly (i.e., check the number of credits and so forth).
- 8. At the end of the semester, provide the Honors College office with a copy of your final product.**

** Research in Honors differs from departmental undergraduate research in that 1) the proposal is more detailed and 2) the student has more input into what s/he wants to gain from the experience. If you are planning more than one semester of research, we advise that you complete your departmental research work first; then you can continue on the same project under the Honors 686 Research in Honors course number for 2-3 credits in the following semester. This preliminary research experience helps you to decide exactly what you want to gain from the additional semester of Honors research and enriches the experience.