

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
Honors College

## Senior Honors Project Handbook Honors 687

(1-6H cr; retakable to a maximum of 6H crs. Not open to students with credit in Honors 689)

**PLEASE NOTE:** Students considering the senior project option should consult with the Honors project liaison **during their junior year** to discuss requirements and procedures. Before you register for a senior honors project, you must have an approved proposal. **All proposals must be formally submitted to the Honors College by August 15 for fall semester or January 5 for spring semester.** To find out who the Honors project liaison is, call the Honors College office at 414-229-4658 or stop by the Honors College office, GAR 302

### **WHAT IS THE SENIOR HONORS PROJECT?**

The senior honors project (Honors 687) is a substantial independent project in the arts, such as music, art, or creative writing; the applied arts, such as architecture or graphic design; or applied sciences, such as engineering or computer science. The project should reflect independent or creative work conducted under a faculty advisor's supervision, usually in your major field. Through discussions with your faculty advisor and the Honors project liaison, you can determine the scope, length, and style of the work, which will also depend on the number of credits (3-6) you wish to earn. To contact the Honors project liaison, call the Honors College at 414-229-4658 or stop by the office in Garland 302.

You do not have to complete a senior project to graduate with an Honors degree, but it can provide a sense of completion to your undergraduate study and might also serve as a senior project in other UWM schools, such as architecture or engineering.

### **WHY DO A SENIOR PROJECT?**

Undertaking an extensive independent project allows you to apply what you've learned and to create something that reflects your very best work. It can help you to learn what kind of creative work you enjoy as well as help you develop your artistic and organizational abilities. In addition, a senior project tailored to pull together many of your special interests provides a capstone to your undergraduate education.

Completing a senior project is valuable for students considering graduate school or advanced artistic study. A successfully completed senior honors project is often persuasive evidence to graduate schools and fellowship committees of your potential for outstanding performance at the advanced level. It can also be helpful in building a strong professional resume early which can lead to internships and other positions in your field.

## **DEVELOPING A SENIOR PROJECT**

The two most difficult problems facing a student considering a senior project are defining the project's idea and scope and finding a faculty project advisor. Normally, the senior project grows out of your work in your major field. Consulting with several faculty members in your department can help in identifying and refining your project ideas.

Here are some examples of projects proposed by UWM Honors students in recent years:

- Mixed media sculpture
- Monotype and intaglio
- Classical guitar composition: Solo and ensemble pieces
- A folk art catalog for the Milwaukee Art Museum
- A poetry portfolio
- A multimedia registration system for works in the UWM Art Museum
- A restaurant design

## **FINDING A FACULTY PROJECT ADVISOR**

It is your responsibility to find a faculty project advisor. You might want to choose a former faculty member whom you admire and feel comfortable with. Faculty members supervise senior projects on a voluntary basis, but many will be pleased to assist a serious student with a project pertaining to their field of study or interest.

The faculty advisor is essential to a successful project. The advisor offers the student informed, constructive criticism at all stages from the formulation of a workable idea to the completion of the actual project. He/she provides advice and, if necessary, training in the necessary skills. The project advisor will also evaluate the finished work.

## **THE HONORS PROJECT LIAISON**

The Honors project liaison is also available to help you. The Honors project liaison is not meant to serve as a substitute for the project advisor, but instead to provide additional support. Specifically, the Honors project liaison will read and make suggestions on the proposal, meet with you and your faculty advisor about the project, and assist with the evaluation of the project after it is complete. To find out who the Honors project liaison is, call the Honors College office at 414-229-4658 or stop by the office.

## **THE PROJECT PROPOSAL**

The proposal is intended to serve as a guide and framework to which you can continually return as you refine your project. The proposal will also help your project advisor understand the nature of your project and thus be able to provide solid advice. Ultimately, you should work with your advisor when developing your proposal. You should both agree on the project's scope and direction, the frequency of advising sessions, and a timetable for completion.

Every proposal is different. Nevertheless, as a general rule, the proposal should be two to three pages long and contain the following kinds of information:

**a. Description of the nature and scope of the project**

The proposal should include a clear statement of the nature of your project. Ask yourself the following questions and provide clear and direct answers to them. What am I investigating or producing? Why do I find this significant and interesting? How will this project contribute to my field of study? Are the project and scope specifically defined? Can I complete the project in the time proposed?

**b. Organization of the project**

In your proposal, you should provide a tentative outline of your project and a timetable for its completion. This outline may of course be changed throughout the course of your project--it probably will due to the nature of creative projects. The purpose of drawing it up is to encourage you to think through the overall structure of your project and the relationship of its parts.

**c. Plan of research**

Your proposal may contain a paragraph or two about how you plan to proceed in your research. For instance, if you are working on a poetry portfolio, which poets are you planning to read for guidance? In what literary forms will you work? If you are doing a body of paintings, which artists are you looking to for inspiration? Are you going to research any technical methods to use in your project, such as intaglio printmaking, oil glazing, or raku ceramic firing?

**d. Annotated bibliography**

When appropriate, your proposal should also include an **annotated** bibliography of primary and secondary source material. The purpose of this section is to help you discover what materials are relevant to your project and whether or not these materials are available in UWM's library. List the works you will be using during completion of your project and provide a sentence or two describing how you believe each work will influence your project. Of course, creative projects do not require extensive citations and bibliographies--however, we would like an idea of what may have influenced your work.

Most important, the project effort must be appropriate for the number of credits involved, either three credits for one semester or six credits for two semesters. Discuss these points explicitly in your proposal or, if you have questions, consult with the Honors project liaison.

**PROCEDURE AND TIMETABLE FOR A SENIOR HONORS PROJECT**

If you are interested in doing a senior project, you should consult with the Honors project liaison during **your junior year** (56-87 credits) to discuss requirements and procedures. At this time, you should also meet with appropriate department faculty, develop a project topic, select a project advisor, and if desired, get departmental approval for counting the project toward your major requirements.

### **a. Getting the proposal approved**

**No later than the end of your junior year**, you must draft a proposal based on the guidelines provided above and show it to the Honors project liaison. (Since the proposal may go through several revisions, it is important to leave ample time for the writing process. Once the project liaison has approved the proposal for submission, you will receive a signature form to fill out and attach to your proposal. The signature form must be signed by your faculty project advisor before the proposal is formally submitted to the Honors College.

➔ **All proposals must be formally submitted to the Honors College by August 15 for fall semester or January 5 for spring semester.**

The proposal must be formally approved by the director of the Honors College before you can register for the course.

After the proposal is approved, you will be registered for Honors 687 by the assistant director of the Honors College. The Honors project liaison will arrange a meeting to discuss the project with you and your project advisor, making sure that all parties involved know how to proceed.

### **b. Completing the project**

When you satisfactorily complete the senior project, your project advisor should assign a final grade. Your completed project must be turned in to the Honors College for final approval **no later than one week before the end of semester classes**.

The Honors College appreciates you sharing the final form of your project with us, whether it consists of a portfolio, a manuscript, an exhibition, or a performance.