



JOHN V. ROACH  
HONORS COLLEGE



## Departmental Honors: Overview of Goals and Duties

To earn Departmental Honors, students in the John V. Roach Honors College must complete a research or creative project in their major (or in their minor or area of emphasis, with approval from the unit head). Under the guidance of a faculty mentor, Departmental Honors students design and carry out a research project or creative work, typically over two semesters. Students enroll in designated Departmental Honors courses during these semesters, earning 1-3 credit hours per course. Senior students present their projects publicly and publish their finished works in the archives of the Mary Coats Burnett Library.

As its name suggests, “Departmental Honors” is a collaborative partnership between academic departments (and their associated Colleges and Schools) and the John V. Roach Honors College.

### Departmental Honors students

#### First steps

- Talk to your Honors advisor about Departmental Honors vs. University Honors
- Declare your intent to pursue Departmental Honors via the Honors College survey
- Find a professor in your major, minor, or area of emphasis who is willing to supervise your project
- Talk to your supervising professor or department chair about the course requirements for Departmental Honors in their unit

#### Phase 1 (typically during junior year or first semester of senior year)

- Enroll in the first required Departmental Honors course
- Work with your supervising professor to identify 1-2 committee members (the required number varies by unit)
- Submit a Departmental Honors Registration Form to the Honors College

#### Phase 2 (typically during second semester of senior year)

- Make a public presentation of your project (in a venue and format determined by your College or School)
- Submit a full draft of your project to your committee members (via the Honors College online submission system) no later than two weeks before final exam week
- Submit your final document (via the online system) by the Monday of finals week

### **Supervising professors**

- Help students to identify a meaningful and tractable topic, determine appropriate methods of inquiry, form a Departmental Honors committee, and develop a realistic timeline for completion;
- Assist students as necessary in securing IRB/IACUC approval for projects involving human/live animal subjects;
- Help students understand and enact the iterative *process* of inquiry;
- Advise students on formal details of the final product: organizational structure, formatting conventions, and citation style;
- Attend public presentations of students' projects; and
- Upon completion of each student's project, approve (or not) the student's Departmental Honors work (product *and* process) via the Honors College online system.

### **Committee members**

- Provide formative feedback to students at two key points: (1) in the initial development of their project and (2) upon completion of the first full draft;
- Help students understand and enact the iterative process of inquiry;
- Attend public presentations of students' projects; and
- Upon completion of each student's project, approve (or not) the student's Departmental Honors work (product and process) via the Honors College online system.

### **Department chairs**

- Make sure the unit's required sequence of Departmental Honors courses is clearly articulated and understood by students and faculty members;
- Sign off on students' Departmental Honors Registration Forms, to ensure that the composition of each student's committee is consistent with departmental norms/guidelines and appropriate faculty workloads; and
- Maintain open communication with the Honors College, including suggestions of ways that Honors might better support Departmental Honors students and faculty mentors.

### **Colleges and Schools**

- Organize public student presentations in a format of the college's choosing any time during the spring semester but no later than the first week of April (in advance of Honors Week, typically the second week of April);
- Facilitate Departmental Honors students' participation in the annual Boller Award competition by organizing college/school-level competitions to determine which student(s) will represent each college/school in the Boller Finals during Honors Week<sup>1</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> Each college/school is represented by at least one student in the Boller Finals; additional slots are allocated – up to an overall limit of 12 – based on the number and composition of students completing Departmental Honors during that academic year.

- Designate a faculty or staff liaison to facilitate communication with the Honors College about student presentations and the Boller Award process;
- Send the name(s) of the college/school's Boller Finalist(s) to the Honors College no later than the Wednesday before Honors Week; and
- Designate one faculty member to serve as a judge (and a second faculty member to serve as alternate judge) for the Boller Finals during Honors Week.

### **Honors College**

- Provides each department with updated lists of students who have declared intent to pursue Departmental Honors;
- Provides modest stipends to supervising professors;
- Communicates general goals and expectations for Departmental Honors projects (for example, the new requirement that students submit a full draft of their project to all committee members no less than two weeks before the final submission deadline);
- Provides resources to assist students, faculty committees, and department chairs (sample projects, answers to FAQ, instructions for scheduling Departmental Honors courses, and other helpful documents) via the Honors College website;
- Works with Colleges and Schools to coordinate public presentations of students' work;
- Welcomes faculty feedback on how to enhance the Departmental Honors process; and
- Celebrates students' work by posting a summary of each senior project on the Honors College website.