



# JOHN V. ROACH HONORS COLLEGE



## Departmental Honors: Questions and Answers

Members of the John V. Roach Honors College may choose to pursue Upper-Division Departmental Honors. In doing so, they will complete a Departmental Honors Project under the guidance of a faculty committee.

**Procedures and methodologies vary from department to department; therefore, Honors students who want to pursue Departmental Honors should consult with a faculty member from their major department.**

### What IS a Departmental Honors Project?

A Departmental Honors Project can take many forms. The discipline(s) in which you are working shapes the content and method for this work. Here are a few examples:

- Research carried out using appropriate methodology in order to prove a hypothesis or answer a specific question;
- A meta-analysis (a study of studies) wherein you synthesize and consider implications of others' major past research and present your own argument about how scholars, practitioners, and the public can/should use that research;
- A performance-based or artistic piece (e.g., choreography, a play, a recital, a collection of paintings or photographs, etc.) with reflection and analysis. This could include an artist's statement that examines the creative process;
- A scholarly examination of a particular moment in history, a genre or author in literature, or a cultural product examined over time or in a specific context;
- A research-backed argument about a past or current trend;
- A study of a major issue, carried out using methods ranging from surveys to interviews to ethnographic observation;
- An analysis of "best practices" or "promising practices" in a particular professional field;
- A case study of professional practice as carried out in one specific context in a particular field;
- A sustained product of creative writing (e.g., a collection of stories and/or poems; a novella; a screenplay; a multimedia production). This could include an artist's statement that examines the author's process.

### Why should I pursue Departmental Honors?

Departmental Honors Projects can:

- Prepare you for graduate work.
- Allow you to pursue your research interests.
- Enable you to work closely with a Supervising Professor.
- Enhance your resume and graduate/professional school applications.

- Sharpen your critical thinking, research, and writing skills.
- Offer potential employers insight into your research interests and skills.
- Give you experience in the planning and management of a large-scale project from concept to completion.

### **What are the first steps for pursuing Departmental Honors?**

During the second semester of your sophomore year, or very early in your junior year, you should discuss your desire to pursue Departmental Honors with a faculty member in your major department. You might already have a topic in mind; if so, you can discuss that topic with the faculty member. If you are undecided about a topic, then you can ask a faculty member for ideas, suggestions, and advice. Some students start with a specific idea in mind. Other students may spend a semester reading texts and exploring possible project topics. Either way, a faculty member from your academic department can be a great resource for helping you brainstorm ideas and consider feasible topics.

### **With whom should I work?**

You should work with a faculty member from your major department or discipline who has similar research interests/passions as you; or, a faculty member who has inspired you; or, a faculty member who has sparked your interest in a particular subject within your academic discipline.

Faculty members are not obligated to serve as Supervising Professors. Be sure to ask the professor if s/he has time to work with you.

### **What are some key questions to ask my Supervising Professor?**

- Which courses should I take to complete Departmental Honors?
- What are the project timelines and deadlines?
- What are the expectations for working together?
- If you're working with human/animal subjects: What is the IRB/IACUC process?
- Does the department require a defense in addition to a presentation?.
- How should I format my project?

### **When should I get started on my project?**

You should give yourself at least 3 full semesters to complete your project. Some departments have prerequisites that you must complete before beginning your project, so contact your major department as early as possible to prepare.

### **How many courses do I need to take for Departmental Honors?**

It depends. Most departments have two Departmental Honors courses – a junior-level course and a senior-level course. Most students will take a total of 6 credit hours for Departmental Honors.

### **How many credit hours will I earn for completing Departmental Honors?**

The number of credit hours that you will earn for completion of Departmental Honors varies from department to department. Discuss this with your departmental academic advisor and/or your Departmental Honors Project Supervisor.

**When do I begin taking the Departmental Honors courses?**

The timing of Departmental courses varies by department. Discuss this with your departmental academic advisor and/or your Supervising Professor. Keep in mind that you may be able to adjust the timeline based upon various factors, such as studying abroad, participating in a Washington, D.C. Internship, graduating early, etc. Also, note that some departments have prerequisites that you must complete prior to enrolling in the Departmental Honors-related course(s).

**How do the Departmental Honors courses work?**

Again, this varies from department to department. In many cases, the two Departmental Honors courses are “directed study” courses in which you work independently under the guidance of your Departmental Honors Project committee. Many of the Departmental Honors courses are worth three credit hours each. You will earn a letter grade, not a P/NC grade.

**As I start my Departmental Honors Project, in what types of activities will I engage?**

- Exploring possible project topics
- Selecting, developing, and refining the project topic
- Setting up a timeline for completion of tasks
- Conducting background research
- Creating a proposal and presenting it to a committee
- Reviewing applicable books, periodicals, journals, and other texts and media
- Writing a literature review
- Designing a study
- Creating a solid plan of action and moving forward with that plan
- Collecting data
- Creating an outline for the project

**Will my Departmental Honors courses count toward my major?**

This depends on your academic department. Some departments will count one of the two courses toward your major. Some will count both of the courses toward your major. Some departments will count neither course toward your major. Also, all grading is department specific. Check with your department regarding project grading procedures.

**What else do I need to know about enrolling in the Departmental Honors courses?**

You should look for the appropriate Departmental Honors course on the online Class Search. If the course in which you need to enroll is not listed, please contact the Chair of your academic department.

**When do I submit the Departmental Honors Project Registration form?**

See the Honors College website for the registration form and current due dates.

**Can I pursue Departmental Honors in my minor?**

Yes, if the chair of your major and minor departments agree. Ask the chairs before you begin the project.

**Will I present my project?**

Yes. May graduates will present their Departmental Honors Projects in late March or early April of their senior year. December graduates will present at the end of their final semester.

**Will I be graded on my presentation?**

No. The presentation provides a platform to share your work with others. The audience will be made up of people whom you've invited, including professors, family members, and friends as well as other interested faculty, staff, and students.

**May I complete both Departmental and University Honors?**

Yes. If you choose to do this, you will need to complete three Honors Colloquia for University Honors.

**When is my Departmental Honors Project due?**

Your project is due toward the end of your graduation semester. For specific deadlines, refer to the Honors College website.

**What is the format of the Departmental Honors Project?**

Please consult with your academic department to determine the style and format of your project.

**Is there a minimum page requirement?**

The Honors College does not have a page requirement. Your academic department may have page requirements, so you should discuss this with your Supervising Professor. It needs to be long enough to provide an in-depth analysis of your topic, but length expectations vary widely, depending upon topic and discipline.

**I'm majoring in the College of Fine Arts or Film-TV-Digital Media or Writing. May I complete a creative project to fulfill Departmental Honors requirements?**

Yes. Examples of what past Fine Arts/FTDM/Writing majors have done include choreographing a dance, composing an original piece of music, performing a music recital, directing a play, producing a TV show, and writing a novel or screenplay. If you complete a creative project for Departmental Honors, you may still submit a final paper that provides context for the artistic endeavor and a reflection of the artistic process. Ask your Supervising Professor for details.

**Can I review past projects to get an idea of what the final paper looks like?**

Yes. All Departmental Honors Projects through May 2012 are kept in volumes in a vault in the Special Collections section of the TCU Library. The Special Collections section is open 8:00-5:00 and is located on the third floor of the Library. You would first need to find the specific work that you want to review by using the Library Catalog. Search using the keywords: "Honors papers." Or you can use the keywords: "Honors paper in biology" or "Honors paper in marketing," etc. Let the Special Collections Librarian know the year and volume that you are looking for. For example, you might want to see a project from *TCU Honors Papers 1970*, volume 2. The Librarian will pull the volume for you. Since the Fall 2012 semester, the Departmental Honors Projects have been posted online as digital documents in the TCU Library Catalog. To find these, search using the following keywords: *Texas Christian University honors*

*papers electronic resource.* You can also go to the TCU Digital Repository to access past Honors Projects: <https://repository.tcu.edu/>. Enter “Honors Projects” in the search box.

### What are some examples of past Departmental Honors Projects?

- **Accounting:** [\*Tax Provisions for Executive Compensation and Their Effects on Corporate Incentive Structures Following the Enactment of the Troubled Asset Relief Program\*](#) (Brooks Anthony)
- **Anthropology:** [\*Quiverfull: Family Reformation and Intentional Community\*](#) (Megan Taylor)
- **Art:** [\*Tread Softly: A Study of the Uncontrollable\*](#) (Kylie Martin)
- **Art History:** [\*Desperate Heroines: Gender and Power in Seventeenth-Century Italian Art\*](#) (Kirby Richards)
- **Biology:** [\*Connection of the ClpXP Protease to Autolytic Activity and Antibiotic Resistance in Bacillus Anthracis\*](#) (Kevin Claunch)
- **Biochemistry:** [\*Steps Toward a New Synthesis of Hippadine\*](#) (Thomas Purgett)
- **Business Information Systems:** [\*The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Black Market: The Cause, Effects, and Lessons of the Fall of the Silk Road\*](#) (Wesley Lacson)
- **Chemistry:** [\*Porphyrin-Polymer Supramolecular Assemblies in Water: Spectroscopic and Thermodynamic Properties\*](#) (Barrington Hwang)
- **Child Development:** [\*Identity Development in Residential Youth\*](#) (Meg Mathews)
- **Communication Studies:** [\*The Impact of Communicative and Structural Openness on Adoptive Families' Communication Patterns, Relational Maintenance Behaviors, and Family Functioning\*](#) (Sarah Shipman)
- **Computer Science:** [\*Classical Chinese Sentence Segmentation as Sequence Labeling\*](#) (Yizhou Hu)
- **Criminal Justice:** [\*Treatment of Child Sex Offenders: Examining Effectiveness Toward Reducing Recidivism from the Offender's Perspective\*](#) (Jennifer Barthel)
- **Dance:** [\*As You Will: Sensing Perception through Concert Dance\*](#) (Caroline Lloyd)
- **Economics:** [\*A Rational Defense of Employment-Based Immigration Reform\*](#) (Saman Sadeghi)
- **Education:** [\*Technology Integration: Key Components for Effective Implementation in Secondary English/Language Arts Classrooms\*](#) (Meagan Carley)
- **Engineering:** [\*Membrane Technology: A Method of Gas Separation\*](#) (Skylar Addicks)
- **English:** [\*The Discourse of Being “Tamed”: Feminism, Self-Identity, and the Nature of Power in The Taming of the Shrew and Its Afterlives\*](#) (Kourtney Kinsel)
- **Environmental Science:** [\*Soil Hydration and Nitrogen Filtration in Rain Gardens\*](#) (Haley Rylander)
- **Film, Television, and Digital Media:** [\*Zombified: America Has Been Bitten! Zombie Films in 21<sup>st</sup> Century America\*](#) (Emily Mendez)
- **Finance:** [\*The Use of Sustainability Metrics in Executive Compensation Plans and Their Effect on Corporations\*](#) (Michelle Nguyen)
- **Geography:** [\*Pocket Ghetto: A Geographic Analysis of Butler Place in Fort Worth, Texas\*](#) (Stephen Lopez)

- **Geology:** [\*Predicting the Mineralogy of Vesta Using Both Meteoritic and Synthetic Samples\*](#) (Katelyn Lehman)
- **Graphic Design:** [\*Scholart: A Proposed Solution to Public Art Education\*](#) (Samantha Schulien)
- **Habilitation of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing:** [\*Dancing to Your Voice: The Impact of Cochlear Implantation on Parent-Infant Vocal Turns\*](#) (Lora Choi)
- **History:** [\*From Under the Bow: A Redefinition of the Purpose and Potential of Museums for Society in the Digital Age\*](#) (Danika Scevers)
- **Interior Design:** [\*The Residences at Hotel Pinckney\*](#) (Rachel Frazier)
- **Journalism:** [\*“News Comedy” Shows and Media Criticism: Influence of The Colbert Report on Viewers’ Interpretations of Media Credibility\*](#) (Molly Spain)
- **Kinesiology:** [\*Physical Activity and Body Composition in Children with Cerebral Palsy\*](#) (Kelsey Ziegler)
- **Management:** [\*Creativity in the Workplace and Its Effect on Employee Retention\*](#) (Hanna Jane Stradinger)
- **Marketing:** [\*Scoring More Than Touchdowns: The Impact of Athletic Success on the Brand Equity of a University\*](#) (Courtney Schmit)
- **Mathematics:** [\*Pell’s Equations: History, Methods, and Number Theory\*](#) (Drew Curd)
- **Merchandising:** [\*History of American Fashion During the Hollywood Golden Age\*](#) (Amy Roberts)
- **Modern Language Studies (French):** [\*Public Discourse and Immigrant Assimilation: Incompatibility and the Othering of Immigrant Groups\*](#) (Hannah Paul)
- **Modern Language Studies (German):** [\*Investigation into American Perspectives of German History: 1874 – Present\*](#) (Jordan Taylor)
- **Music:** [\*Scoring Music to Film: A personal Process\*](#) (Will Wood)
- **Neuroscience:** [\*The Effects of High-Fructose Corn Syrup on Spatial Memory\*](#) (Brianne Younke)
- **Nursing:** [\*Exploration of the Benefits of Exercise on the Physical and Mental Well-Being in a Population of Young Adult Survivors of Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer\*](#) (Alyssa Smith)
- **Nutritional Sciences:** [\*Relationship Between Omega-3 Fatty Acid Containing Foods and Symptoms of Depression\*](#) (Mollie Richardson)
- **Philosophy:** [\*An Aristotelian Conception of Dignity: Magnanimity and the Happy Life of the Philosopher\*](#) (Kendall Gilfillan)
- **Physics:** [\*Studies on Orientation of Organic Fluorescent Dyes in Stretched Polymer Films\*](#) (Thin Nguyen)
- **Political Science:** [\*Changing Politics through Likes and Tweets: How Does Social Media Affect Political Polarization?\*](#) (Brandon Newman)
- **Psychology:** [\*The Role of Death Concerns in the Well-Being of Parents with Autistic Children\*](#) (Sara Eaton)
- **Religion:** [\*The Evolution of Atonement Theories in Western Christian Theology: Where They Have Been and Where They Are Going\*](#) (Madeleine Rebouche)
- **Social Work:** [\*Amazing Faith: Spirituality, Hope, and Resilience in the Lives of Homeless Females in Fort Worth\*](#) (Katie Lewis)

- **Sociology:** [\*The Social Significance and Meaning of Snake Companionship\*](#) (Elizabeth Ringeisen)
- **Spanish:** [\*Se-Vida: Una Vista del Cuerpo y del Alma de Sevilla a Través de su Arquitectura y Comida\*](#) (Mackenzie Fleck)
- **Speech-Language Pathology:** [\*Linguistic Characteristics of the Stuttered Word in a Bilingual Spanish-English Speaking Child\*](#) (Regina Sanchez)
- **Strategic Communication:** [\*Public Relations and Advocacy Activities of NGOs Working in South Sudan: A Study of Strategy in Capacity-Building Development\*](#) (Michael Dabbs)
- **Supply and Value Chain Management:** [\*Supply Chain Implications in Regard to Consumer Behavior in Online Retail: Site-to-Store versus Direct Shipping\*](#) (Mason Richards)
- **Theatre:** [\*Sez Me: A Reflection on the Process and Product of Directing Sez She by Jane Martin at Theatre TCU\*](#) (Rashuan Sibley)
- **Writing:** [\*Facebook for Dead People and Other Essays\*](#) (Rachel Spurrier)