

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

HNRS 491 Honors Thesis (1-3)

Prerequisites: HNRS 485; additional prerequisites such as an upper-division laboratory science, literary period, or methods course may be required by the instructor of record.

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Classroom; Days/Time:	By appointment
Prerequisites:	HNRS 485

How to use this syllabus

This syllabus provides you with information specific to this course, and it also provides information about important university policies. This document should be viewed as a course overview; it is not a contract and is subject to change as the semester evolves.

Definition of a Credit Hour

Success in a 3 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course for preparation/studying and research-related activities for a total of at least 135 hours.

Course Description

This course is an independent study course for students undertaking the research and writing of an Honors thesis. An Honors thesis is a substantive piece of scholarship or creative work involving primary and/or secondary research, which serves to demonstrate mastery over the discourse, methods, and content of at least one academic, creative, or professional field. A thesis requires students to synthesize knowledge and skills acquired over the course of the undergraduate career (including coursework, studies abroad, service learning, internships, and undergraduate research, if applicable). All thesis projects must be designed and completed under the supervision of a faculty thesis supervisor and, at the supervisor's discretion, may be reviewed by additional faculty advisors. Course is repeatable for up to 6 credits.

All Honors Baccalaureate students must enroll in at least 3 credits of HNRS 491 and successfully complete a thesis to complete requirements for the degree. At the discretion of the thesis supervisor, students may register for thesis project credit over one or two semesters, e.g. register for 1 credit in the first semester of their senior year and 2 credits in the second/final semester of their senior year. Students may be required by the thesis supervisor to register for more than 3 credits of HNRS 491.

The Honors Dean reviews all theses before submitting certification to the Registrar's Office, and the Honors thesis is kept in the Honors library archive with permission of the student and faculty supervisor.

Thesis Supervisor

The Honors thesis requires students to apprentice themselves to an established scholar/practitioner within their field of study. Students must seek out and secure mentors who agree to supervise the thesis project through each stage of the process – from the initial proposal through the research and analysis or design stages to final presentation. Thesis supervisors are expected to mentor students toward challenging intellectual experiences that advance the student's critical and/or creative abilities. The thesis supervisor serves as the instructor of record for HNRS 491.

Expected Outcomes of Honors Thesis Work

Upon successful completion of 3 credits of HNRS 491, students will be able to:

- demonstrate mastery over the discourse, methods, and content of at least one academic, creative, or professional field;
- critically evaluate research articles or creative work in the field;
- critically analyze data for accuracy;
- integrate core critical abilities, including critical and/or creative thinking, as well as analytical and communication skills;
- produce an independent piece of scholarship/work that demonstrates intensive study of a specific topic, research problem, or creative method;
- and articulate cultural, philosophical, scientific, artistic, professional and/or political issues relevant to their topic, problem, or method.

Expected Outcomes of Honors Education

Article I of the original Honors College Charter stipulates that the Honors College shall dedicate itself to the following pursuits:

1. Developing a sense of community and common identity among its members;
2. Cultivating an intellectual ethic among its members, including:
 - a. A contribution to the knowledge in one's chosen discipline;
 - b. A value of and interest in the knowledge in other disciplines;
 - c. A mastery of cognitive, transferable, and practical skills;
 - d. A commitment to curiosity and lifelong learning.
3. Cultivating a professional ethic among its members, including:
 - a. A passionate pursuit of long-term goals;
 - b. A high degree of personal integrity and ethical conduct;
 - c. A value of respectful, productive working relationships;
 - d. A sense of common purpose and meaning.
4. Cultivating an innovative ethic among its members, including:
 - a. A creative approach to solving problems;
 - b. A capacity for identifying unaddressed challenges and needs;
 - c. A willingness to accept risk and ambiguity in proposing solutions;
 - d. A facility with borrowing from several disciplines and identifying connections between them to find interdisciplinary solutions.
5. Cultivating a transformational ethic among its members, including:
 - a. An urge to make a positive impact on the community and in the world;
 - b. An open-minded embrace of diversity in backgrounds, values, and perspectives;
 - c. A marriage of deliberation and decision in taking action;
 - d. An understanding of the importance of inspiring others.

Academic Honesty

Students are responsible for knowing and following the Student Code of Conduct

http://webs.wichita.edu/inaudit/ch8_05.htm and the Student Academic Honesty policy

http://webs.wichita.edu/inaudit/ch2_17.htm.

When referring to the work of others, it is important to cite their research with a suitable reference. A thesis will typically cite 20-50 references. The reasons for this are twofold. First, it directs the reader to a source that may be useful for understanding the project and provides evidence that the statements being made in the thesis are valid. Second, it provides credit to the authors of the study. Formatting of the Literature Cited or Works Cited section is at the discretion of the advisor but should follow a standard and specific citation style (e.g., MLA, APA).

Class Protocol

Students are expected to arrange weekly meetings with the faculty member and to arrive on time to meetings prepared with questions related to the research or creative activity and thesis drafts as assigned. To cancel a meeting, email the instructor with as much advance notice as possible.

Cell phones must be turned off or silenced and put away during meetings. Let the instructor know if you need to leave your cell phone on for any reason.

Grading Scale

Points	Letter grade	Grade Points	Interpretation
270-300 points	A	4.00	<i>denotes excellent performance.</i>
240-269 points	B	3.00	<i>denotes good performance.</i>
239-210 points	C	2.00	<i>denotes satisfactory performance.</i>
209-180 points	D	1.00	<i>denotes unsatisfactory performance.</i>
179 points or below	F	0.00	<i>denotes failing performance.</i>

Grades for HNRS 491 are based on research and thesis components as follows:

Research (200 possible points)

The assigned grade for research will necessarily reflect the priorities and expectations of the supervising faculty member. Some suggested guidelines for assigning grades are provided below.

A: Student assumes responsibility for directing project. Demonstrates clear understanding of hypothesis tested and of experimental or creative approaches used in the field. Student keeps an accurate record of experiments neatly written in a notebook or in a digital log. Student attends regularly and arrives on time for lab or research work and meetings. (180-200 points)

B: Student has modest understanding of hypothesis tested and of experimental or creative approaches used in the field. Student keeps an accurate record of experiments neatly written in a notebook or in a digital log. Student attends regularly and arrives on time for lab or research work and meetings. (160-180 points)

C: Student has modest understanding of hypothesis tested and of experimental or creative approaches used in the field. Student is not reliable regarding hours in lab or is not reliable in maintaining an accurate record of lab work or research/creative activity. (140-160 points)

D: Student has poor understanding of research project or creative activity. Student is not reliable regarding hours in lab or is not reliable in maintaining an accurate record of lab work or research/creative activity. (120-140 points)

F: Student fails to grasp basic concepts driving research project or creative activity. Student has substantial issues regarding hours in lab or in maintaining an accurate record of lab work or research/creative activity. (120 points or below)

Thesis (100 possible points)

Information about thesis content is listed below under Thesis Requirements.

A: Student completes written or creative assignments in a timely manner and the thesis meets or exceeds expectations. (90 – 100 points)

B: Student completes written or creative assignments in a timely manner and the thesis meets expectations. (80 – 90 points)

C: Student does not complete written or creative assignments by the suggested deadlines and the thesis fails to meet expectations. (70 – 80 points)

D: Student does not complete written or creative assignments and the thesis contains significant flaws. (60 – 70 points)

F: Student fails to complete the thesis. (60 points or lower).

Thesis Requirements

The substance and format of thesis projects may vary depending on the student's major discipline and/or field of study. The expectations for what constitutes a "high-quality" thesis project should be established through substantive discussion with the student about established standards of excellence within the thesis supervisor's discipline.

Given variances across disciplines, determinations of the scope, breadth, and intellectual parameters of the thesis remain the judgment of the thesis supervisor, but the following general guidelines should be taken into consideration:

Visual Arts, Performing Arts, or Creative Writing. The creative Honors Thesis consists of a substantial body of work that displays your best creative work or methods learned over the course of your undergraduate career. Your thesis should also include an introductory essay contextualizing your creative work within the field and offering critical insights into your creative process. Works of fiction usually run 50 pages, while poetry typically has somewhat fewer pages. The page requirements will vary greatly depending on the project.

Humanities and Social Sciences. The Honors Thesis in these disciplines is typically envisioned and executed entirely as a written piece of work. This kind of thesis might resemble a long research paper in form, but it is different than a class paper. It tackles a problem that others have not yet addressed adequately, or it approaches the problem from a new angle. Research into what others have said and done is the essential first step, but your thesis should go beyond prior work to include your own insights and critical thinking. You should have an acquaintance with the relevant scholarship and display originality in the formulation of your arguments. Typically, such a thesis will be 30-50 pages (double-spaced, 12 point Times or equivalent font).

Experimental Sciences and Engineering. An Honors Thesis in an experimentation-based discipline typically arises from close collaboration with a faculty member on an existing research project. Ideally, you will identify a significant aspect of that research and craft a smaller project representing your own work. The thesis should include an introduction explaining the relevance of your work to the broader field of study, a brief literature review, an explanation of methodology or experimental design that includes pertinent explanations of all technical innovations and processes, an appropriate representation of results achieved, a conclusion, and a list of works cited. On average, the thesis will be 25-30 pages.

Page limit includes figures and their legends, but not the Literature Cited. Disciplines that do not follow the "page count" model, where, for example, students conduct original scientific research, work a proof or write software, or produce a portfolio of creative works, may require thesis projects that involve the production of artifacts other than a written paper.

Other Important Course and Campus Information

Important Academic Dates

For _____semester 20____, classes begin _____, _____ 20____, and end _____, _____, 20____. The last date to drop a class and receive a W (withdrawn) instead of F (failed) is _____, 20____. There are no classes on _____, 20____. The final exam period is _____, 20____.

Disabilities

If you have a physical, psychiatric/emotional, or learning disability that may impact on your ability to carry

out assigned course work, I encourage you to contact the Office of Disability Services (DS). The office is located in Grace Wilkie Annex, room 150, (316) 978-3309 (voice/tty) (316-854-3032 videophone). DS will review your concerns and determine, with you, what academic accommodations are necessary and appropriate for you. All information and documentation of your disability is confidential and will not be released by DS without your written permission.

Counseling & Testing

The WSU Counseling & Testing Center provides professional counseling services to students, faculty and staff; administers tests and offers test preparation workshops; and presents programs on topics promoting personal and professional growth. Services are low cost and confidential. They are located in room 320 of Grace Wilkie Hall, and their phone number is (316) 978-3440. The Counseling & Testing Center is open on all days that the University is officially open. If you have a mental health emergency during the times that the Counseling & Testing Center is not open, please call COMCARE Crisis Services at (316) 660-7500.

Diversity and Inclusion

Wichita State University is committed to being an inclusive campus that reflects the evolving diversity of society. To further this goal, WSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, political affiliation, status as a veteran, genetic information or disability. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Executive Director, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount, Wichita KS 67260-0138; telephone (316) 978-3186.

Intellectual Property

Wichita State University students are subject to Board of Regents and University policies (see http://webs.wichita.edu/inaudit/ch9_10.htm) regarding intellectual property rights. Any questions regarding these rights and any disputes that arise under these policies will be resolved by the President of the University, or the President's designee, and such decision will constitute the final decision.

Shocker Alert System

Get the emergency information you need instantly and effortlessly! With the Shocker Alert System, we will contact you by email the moment there is an emergency or weather alert that affects the campus. Sign up at www.wichita.edu/alert.

Student Health Services

WSU's Student Health clinic is located in 209 Ahlberg Hall. Hours are 8:00am to 7:00pm (8:00 am to 5:00 pm on Fridays), though the clinic may be closed occasionally on Wednesdays from noon to 1:30pm. The telephone number is (316) 978-3620. In addition to outpatient and preventive care (including immunizations, a prescription service, and testing/counseling for sexually transmitted infections), Student Health can handle minor injuries. All services are confidential. For more information see www.wichita.edu/studenthealth.

The Heskett Center and Campus Recreation

Whether you are wanting to be active on campus, relieve the stress from classes or take care of your body, Wichita State Campus Recreation is the place for you. Campus Recreation, located inside the Heskett Center, contributes to the health, education, and development of Wichita State University students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members by offering quality programs and services. With many programs and facilities which are free to all students and members, Campus Recreation offers its members limitless opportunities. For more information about our services see www.wichita.edu/heskett.

Video and Audio Recording

Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.