

HONORS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Requirements:

The Rollins College Catalogue specifies the following requirements:

Honors in the Major provides for independent research or special study during the senior year, under the supervision of a three member committee in the student's major. To be eligible, students must:

Achieve a minimum overall GPA of C+ (2.33) for all courses at Rollins;

Achieve a minimum overall GPA of B+ (3.33) for all courses taken in the major at Rollins; and

Receive endorsement of the committee for participation in this program.

Satisfactory performance on an approved thesis or individual project and an oral examination, and maintenance of the above averages qualifies a student for Honors in the Major, which is shown on the student's transcript.

Honors Committee

Your committee should include at least three members including your honors advisor, and two additional committee members who are professors in the Rollins Department of Anthropology.

Honors as an Anthropology Course

Honors candidates will register for two semesters of ANT 499, Research, for four hours per semester. The candidate may be assigned a separate grade for each semester based on the work done during that phase of the project. Preliminary research proposals, which must be submitted to Student Records no later than the end of the first week of class of the semester during which the student intends to begin their Honors research, will be circulated in the department and must receive the support of the majority of department members to proceed. Students should complete the Independent Study form and the Honors in the Major Declaration form available on the Student Records website.

Honors Research

The Anthropology Department acknowledges the diversity of scientific approaches within our discipline. Your research may be descriptive, correlational, or experimental, positivistic or phenomenological, applied or basic. Sources of data may be human, animal, or archival. It may even be possible for a student concentrating on historical or philosophical issues within the discipline to research and synthesize existing literature rather than collecting new data. Whatever the mode of the research, you must:

Carry out the research following generally accepted principles and guidelines for the method chosen;

Demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the method chosen to engage in high caliber research; and

Have at least one member of the honors committee who has a level of expertise that is sufficient to evaluate the propriety of the method chosen and the proficiency of its implementation.

Honors Proposal (Semester 1)

The first semester of the honors project will be devoted to reviewing literature, defining methods, and developing materials. The initial part of this process will take place primarily under the guidance of the honors advisor, although you may seek feedback from other committee members when necessary. This phase of the project will culminate in a meeting of the honors committee and candidate with the purpose of reviewing your research proposal. The committee expects a prospectus that is a minimum of 25 – 30 pages (7,500 words).

Unless exceptions are approved by the honors committee, the proposal should be written in a style consistent with the most current Manual of the American Anthropology Association (i.e., AAA style) and should include:

Title page;

Introduction section with a comprehensive review of relevant literature and a clear statement of hypotheses and/or research questions;

Method section describing in detail the proposed research plan including a time line for data collection;

Results section outlining appropriate analyses for the data to be collected;

Reference section listing articles cited in the manuscript; and

Appendices containing all materials and measures to be used in the study.

This proposal, which informs the readers of the goals of your planned study and the methods you intend to employ to achieve your goals. It must also survey the literature relevant to your study. Its focus should be your thesis, that is, the central point or points that you hope to make in it. A thesis can ordinarily be embodied in a single sentence, e.g.:

“Data from both paleontology and paleoecology convincingly demonstrate that early hominids were primarily scavenger gatherers before they become hunter-gatherers.”...or...

“The survival of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon rain forest depends more on their understanding the ways of the industrial world than it does on urban, industrial peoples understanding the Amazon Indians.”

Once a thesis has been established, the remainder of the proposal should tie into it. It is important to explain what kind of data will be gathered to support the thesis and to describe the methods that will be employed to collect and analyze these data.

Your thesis, in a sense, involves you in a scholarly debate or conversation, and you must familiarize yourself with the main points that have been advocated thus far in this debate. Therefore, it is necessary that you list those sources in the literature that are relevant to your topic and demonstrate familiarity with important points raised in these sources.

Of course, your thesis may change as you gather your data and draw your conclusions. This is only natural and, in fact, it happens frequently even with senior scholars. However, if you start out with a clear and precise thesis, you will find that your project will be easier to organize, and if you are forced to make adjustments later, your sense of “groping in the dark” during such adjustments will be considerably reduced. The less desirable alternative would be to have only a vague notion of what you hope to discover or prove, and to spend a lot of time on irrelevant matters, which ultimately prove useless.

The final thesis (completed in the second semester of the honors project) will succeed in incorporating the critically evaluated work of your predecessors, and, through a well-planned and rigorous analysis of your own data, synthesizes all of this into a content and convincing whole. A digital copy of the final thesis should be submitted to the chair of the Anthropology Department after it has been approved by the thesis committee.

Deadlines (Semester 1)

Deadlines for this completing the first semester of the Honors project are at the discretion of the honors committee. However, in most cases the department recommends that each of the following phases of the project take place no later than:

25 days prior to the last day of class: “final draft” of proposal to honors advisor

14 days prior to the last day of class: revised draft (based on advisor’s feedback) to committee members

7 days prior to the last day of class: honors proposal revised according to committee’s comments

Last day of class: final draft of proposal revised according to committee’s comments

Proposal meetings will usually last 1 to 1½ hours and will include a short presentation by the candidate, a question and answer session with the candidate, a private discussion among the committee members where the candidate will be asked to leave the room, and a final discussion of the committee’s decision after the candidate rejoins the group. The meeting may result in the following decisions:

The proposal is accepted without revision (a rare outcome);

The proposal is accepted with some revision (it may be decided that the revisions must be approved by the entire committee, specific members of the committee, or honors advisor alone before the candidate can proceed);

The proposal is rejected in its current form, but the candidate is invited to make major revisions and organize a second proposal meeting; or

The proposal is rejected and it is recommended that the candidate abandon the honors project (the candidate will still receive a grade for the single semester of work and the semester will still count as a 400 level course in the major provided that the candidate receives a passing grade).

Honors Research, Thesis, and Defense (Semester 2)

The second semester of the honors project will be devoted to collecting and analyzing data, and finishing the honors thesis. In most cases, the final manuscript will integrate research results into the proposal paper. The initial part of this process will take place primarily under the guidance of the honors advisor, although the candidate may seek feedback from other committee members when necessary. This phase of the project will culminate in a meeting (“defense”) of the honors committee and candidate with the purpose of reviewing the discussing the candidate’s research and thesis. Unless exceptions are approved by the honors committee, the thesis should be written in a style consistent with the most current Manual of the American Anthropology Association (i.e., AAA style) and should include the following sections: 1) title page; 2) abstract; 3) introduction; 4) method; 5) results; 6) discussion; 7) references; 8) appendices. It should be a minimum of 70 pages (21,000 words).

Deadlines (Semester 2)

Deadlines for this process are at the discretion of the honors committee. However, in most cases the department recommends that each of the following phases of the project take place no later than:

25 days prior to the last day of class: “final draft” of thesis to honors advisor

14 days prior to the last day of class: revised draft (based on advisor’s feedback) to committee members

7 days prior to the last day of class: honors defense meeting with candidate and advisors

Last day of class: final draft of thesis revised according to committee’s comments

Defense meetings will usually last 1 to 1 ½ hours and will include a short presentation by the candidate, a question and answer session with the candidate, private discussion among the committee members where the candidate will be asked to leave the room, and a final discussion of the committee’s decision after the candidate rejoins the group. The meeting may result in the following decisions:

The thesis is accepted without revision and the candidate is awarded honors in the major (a rare outcome);

The thesis is accepted with some revision to take place before honors in the major is awarded (it may be decided that the revisions must be approved by the entire committee, specific members of the committee, or the honors advisor alone before the candidate can receive honors);

The thesis is rejected in its current form, but the candidate is invited to make major revisions and organize a second defense meeting; or

The thesis is not viewed as being of sufficient quality to warrant honors in the major (the candidate will still receive a grade for the semester of work but will not receive honors in the major).

GRADING

Grades will be assigned on the basis of the following features of the final draft:

Does the thesis deal with a significant issue, that is, an issue that is or could be a topic of debate or discussion in scholarly literature?

Is this issue formulated as a clearly stated, thought-provoking thesis?

Is the thesis cogently argued and supported by relevant data from scholarly sources such as peer-reviewed journals?

Are the data presented in the body of the thesis in a logically coherent and well-organized way so as to demonstrate the validity of the thesis?

Are contradictory information and points of view are taken into account, and plausible criticisms of the thesis are dealt with effectively?

Is the coherently organized with an introduction, a sustained argument pertinent to the thesis and a strong and convincing conclusion?

Does the thesis use clear, straightforward language that presumes no special knowledge on the part of your audience?

Is it properly written in terms of grammar, diction, word usage, spelling and punctuation?

Does it have a system of citations that conforms to AAA standard format and that allows the reader to find any source referred to?