

Honors Thesis Requirements

Students with 30 credit hours and a GPA of 3.3 may apply to the CAFNR Honors Program. Transfer students must complete at least 15 hours at MU and have a GPA of at least 3.3. The application must be submitted through the Biochemistry Department. Students should bring their Honors application, together with a signed copy of these guidelines to Dr. Virginia Peterson, Director, Undergraduate Advising. All students admitted to the Honors Program are required to complete an Honors Thesis to earn the privilege of graduating with honors. The College requirement is for a written thesis and an oral presentation of the thesis.

For students in the Biochemistry Honors Program, the thesis requirement consists of the following:

1. Written Thesis:

The Senior Thesis may take one of two forms:

- a. A thesis reporting on research the student has conducted in a faculty laboratory. A research-based thesis will be similar in format to a journal article and will include the following sections.

- * Title
- * Abstract
- * Literature review
- * Methods
- * Results
- * Discussion
- * References

The literature review should be thorough and more extensive than a typical journal article introduction. Research-based theses are expected to be 10-15 pages exclusive of references. Figures must be prepared to a professional standard.

- b. In rare cases, a student may present a thesis reporting on library research. This paper should present a thorough review and analysis of a topic and will include the following sections.

- * Title
- * Abstract
- * Literature review
- * Summary of the important results
- * Discussion of their implications
- * References

It is suggested that several key papers, in the selected area, be compared and critiqued. Other papers should be used to supply necessary background. These papers may also support or refute the thesis of the key papers. Library-based theses are expected to be 15-20 pages exclusive of references.

2. Presentation

Students are required to make a formal presentation of their thesis. Normally, a student will present the senior thesis in the Senior Seminar class (Biochemistry 4970). However, in some cases, oral or poster presentations, either on-campus or at a scientific meeting, can also be used to satisfy this part of the requirement. Presentation in research group meeting, although a valuable experience, does not satisfy this requirement.

Required timeline for completing the Honors Thesis

In addition to graduating with honors, students in the Honors Program are relieved from the requirement of completing 32 credit hours in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. By entering the Biochemistry Honors Program, students agree to complete their thesis in a timely and professional manner. The following deadlines have been put in place to ensure timely progress on the thesis during the senior year. Failure to meet these deadlines will result in automatic suspension or dismissal from the Honors Program.

- a. **Two semesters prior to graduation:** The Honors student must submit the thesis topic to the Director of Undergraduate Advising for approval at the beginning of their senior year. Students should consult their Honors Committee Chair or faculty supervisor in selecting a topic. Due dates: September 1 for May graduation and February 1 for December or August graduation.
- b. **Mid-term, penultimate semester:** The student must submit an outline of their thesis and a well-written draft of the background literature to their Honors Committee Chair or faculty supervisor **NO LATER THAN** the middle of their penultimate semester. Due dates: November 1 for May graduation, April 1 for December or August graduation.
- c. **Last Day, penultimate semester:** The student must submit revised background literature sections to their Honors Committee Chair or faculty supervisor and the Director of Undergraduate Advising. Target dates are the second Friday in December for May graduation and the second Friday in May for August or December graduation.
- d. **Mid-term, last semester:** The student must submit a draft of the thesis to their Honors Committee Chair or faculty supervisor and the Director of Undergraduate Advising **NO LATER THAN** the middle of their last semester. Due dates: March 15 for May graduation, July 1 for August graduation, and November 1 for December graduation.
- e. The student must submit the final thesis to their Honors Committee Chair at least **two weeks prior to stop day** of their last semester. The Committee Chair or research supervisor must sign the thesis to indicate their approval and send an email verifying acceptance to the Director of Undergraduate Advising. Due dates: April 25 for May graduation, July 25 for August graduation and November 25 for December graduation.
- f. The student will notify the Director of Undergraduate Advising two weeks in advance of the thesis presentation. The notification will be in writing and will indicate the type of presentation (oral or poster) and when and where the presentation will occur.
- g. The thesis will be submitted to the Director of Undergraduate Advising for final approval along with a statement indicating when and where the thesis was presented orally (e.g., in senior seminar or a poster presentation). **Theses submitted later than one week before stop day will be rejected.** Two printed copies and an electronic copy must be submitted.
- h. These policies are designed to ensure progress toward completing the thesis. Failure to meet the deadlines will result in automatic suspension from the Honors Program. Students may be reinstated (or in extreme cases dismissed) from the Program after consultation with the Associate Chair or Director of Undergraduate Advising.

I have read and understood these guidelines.

Student Signature

Date

Committee Chair

Date