Project of Excellence

Cohort 1 (Spring 2005) to Cohort 6 (Fall 2009) Only

As the senior capstone of the overall Honors experience, the Project of Excellence (HONR 4195) is required of all students who graduate from the Honors Program. The Project provides each student the opportunity to design and implement work unique to his/her own major and interest. It consists of a paper, performance, or presentation of research results typical of professional work in the major field.

Ideally, the Project of Excellence grows out of inquiry, problem-solving, and research that begins in the Honors core courses, then develops in Honors contracting, upper-division, internships, and directed independent study courses. As the capstone experience, the Project of Excellence allows the student to integrate previous work and produce an original work of significant scope and importance while collaborating one-on-one with a faculty mentor.

The Project must be approved beforehand by the Honors Council and college in which the student is enrolled, and supervised by an honors faculty member. Results of the Project of Excellence will be presented publicly to honors students and faculty at the end of the semester and housed permanently in the Honors Program office.

General Timeline for the Project of Excellence

- Select your faculty mentor and develop a proposal at the end of your junior year. The proposal will be approved by your mentor (who will be the teacher of record for the course), the Honors Head, and the Honors Council.
- Register for the Project of Excellence the semester prior to graduation. If you plan to graduate in spring 2010, for instance, you will register for your Project of Excellence in fall 2009 and complete it in spring 2010.

Project Proposal

The project proposal must be approved before you can register for HONR 4195 and must include the following:

- Title Page.
- Approval Form [1].
- Introduction to the problem/issues, including the context and rationale for the project. Your introduction should have appropriate citations from primary literature in a documentation style customary in your discipline. Also identify your over-all goal: are you developing this project to publish your research, refine your skills, demonstrate your knowledge of a particular subject, or to more deeply study a topic or concept?
- Project hypothesis or objectives.
- Methods of approach - how will you test the hypothesis or achieve your objectives?
- Outcome - what format will your completed Project take?
- Bibliography.
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, if required.
- Timeline - when you intend to complete primary research, dates that drafts will be completed, and times that you can discuss these drafts with your faculty mentor.
Guidelines for the Project of Excellence

- To ensure that students receive feedback and guidance during the entire process, the role of the faculty member-of-record and Honors Council will be on-going and not simply as gatekeeper reviewing the final product.
- The Honors Head and college representatives on the Council will be doing the reading for the Honors Program. A faculty member in the particular area of specialty might also be consulted. The Honors Director may also read the final projects.
- Students working on their projects of excellence will be involved in writing circles as a peer review mechanism. The circle will mark the deadline for draft #1. Recommendations from fellow students, and from faculty mentors, will be incorporated into draft #2.
- At least 3 drafts will be necessary to produce an acceptable final project. The process will also include time in case there are still problems with the third draft.

Suggested Timeline for Fall Graduation

- First draft due / writing circles: October 15 (peers and faculty of record).
- Second draft due: November 10 (faculty of record).
- Third/final draft due: December 1 (faculty of record and Honors Program readers).

Suggested Timeline for Spring and Summer Graduation

- First draft due / writing circles: March 1 (peers and faculty of record).
- Second draft due: immediately after spring break (faculty of record.)
- Third/final draft due: April 15 (faculty of record and Honors Program readers) Projects will be judged as accomplished, competent, or still developing. See rubric for more detailed information about requirements.

Required Format for the Honors Project of Excellence

1. Title Page to include: title, name, date, cohort number, and Project of Excellence faculty mentor.
2. A one-page abstract.
3. If a running title is used, it must be limited to 50 characters
4. Submit an electronic copy of the final draft to the Head and Director.

Evaluating the Project of Excellence

Your faculty mentor, the Honors Program Head, and two other reviewers (from your field of study and/or the Honors Council) will evaluate your Project. Here are the areas that will be graded as “Developing,” “Competent,” or “Accomplished” (modeled on the rubric from Texas A&M University at College Station):

- Document Design (including documentation conventions)
- Quality of the writing (sentence level features, flow, clarity)
- Organization
- Literature Review / use of sources
- Data
- Analysis of Research
- Argument
- Thesis and its contribution to the field / originality

Evaluation Results

A Project evaluated as “Accomplished” by all reviewers in 5 of these 8 areas will be pronounced
“Completed with Distinction.” A Project evaluated as “Developing” in 4 of the areas by the majority of reviewers will be graded “incomplete” until the student revises and resubmits the Project for further consideration. Until the “I” is removed, a student’s transcript will not show “Graduate of the Honors Program.” If the student does not revise the Project, the “I” will remain permanently on the transcript.

**Oral Presentation**

This is a forum open to honors students, faculty members, and Council members. You will be asked to talk about your research, demonstrating the sort of comfort level with your topic that comes from truly understanding the concepts you set forth in your Project of Excellence. The reviewers of your Project will certainly have questions for you.

**Source URL:** http://honors.tamucc.edu/students/requirements/pofe-y#comment-0

**Links**