

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AN HONORS THESIS

Department of Chemistry

1. **Due date:** Your honors thesis is due no later than 5PM on the last day of classes of the term. The thesis can be submitted via email or turned in to the main office, 1500 CHEM.
2. **Format:**
 - Your thesis must be typed **double spaced** using Times New Roman font, size 12.
 - All pages must be **numbered**
 - **Figures** should be integrated with the text, numbered and accompanied by a descriptive **figure legend**.
 - Reference should be **consecutively numbered** in the text and listed at the end of the thesis. Citations must include the names of all authors, and the title of the paper.

The thesis must have the following sections:

- **Title Page:** This page must contain the following:
 - Thesis title: All capitals, **bold face** font size 14, centered at the top of the page, followed underneath by your name and the date. At the bottom of the page, you must place the following statement:

“This thesis has been read and approved by (Name of faculty thesis advisor).”

Signed : _____ Date: ___/___/___

Faculty advisor e-mail: _____ phone: _____

Please note that you must turn the final version of your thesis over to your advisor at least one week in advance of the due date so that he/she has time to read it.

Your faculty advisor must also sign the thesis on the title page as indicated above to give evidence that he/she has read the thesis before it is handed in. You may not substitute the signature of a graduate student or post-doc from your mentor's laboratory.

- **Abstract:** A brief statement of the contents of your thesis, no more than one page in length.
- **Introduction:** A scholarly review of literature in the field, including the rationale for the experiments that you performed. Note, this section is particularly important as the reader of the thesis, although biochemically literate, is unlikely to

be an expert in your research area. Therefore a more extensive introduction than is typically found in a scientific manuscript is required.

- **Materials and Methods:** Self-explanatory, may be called “Experimental Section”, depending on your sub-area of chemistry..
- **Results:** This section should contain the results of your experiments, including the tables and figures and their legends inserted directly into the text.
- **Discussion:** Discuss your results in the context of other work in the field and your interpretation of their significance.
- **Acknowledgements:** Here you can acknowledge your advisor, other laboratory members, your parents and family members, or other individuals who have been instrumental in your progress towards graduation.
- **References:** Self explanatory-see a Biochemistry/Chemistry paper for the format.

3. Writing the thesis: Although your thesis must be your own original work (see 3 below) you should work closely with your research advisor in planning your thesis. Before beginning to write you should consult with him/her to develop an outline for the thesis. Next, write a first draft for him/her to read and provide feed-back and corrections that can be incorporated into the final draft. You should make sure you allow sufficient time for you to write the thesis and your advisor to read/correct and provide feedback on your thesis.

4. Originality: The Honors thesis is a piece of original writing that you must complete yourself with guidance from your faculty advisor. The research of many Honors students is incorporated into scientific publications, and this is a wonderful tribute to the quality of your efforts. **However, a manuscript published by you and your advisor, even if you helped write it, cannot be submitted as an Honors thesis. The writing must be the original work of the student.** It goes without saying that plagiarism is unacceptable in the writing of an Honors thesis.

5. The Honors thesis and the ULWR: Honors theses may be used in fulfillment of the upper level writing requirement. To do this, you must obtain the agreement of your faculty research advisor to oversee the writing of the thesis, including editing, revisions and suggestions for improvements. Honors has a form that is used to declare your intent to use the Honors thesis writing to meet the ULWR. It is a very good idea to discuss this option with your faculty advisor, and to sign the intent form for the ULWR well in advance of the time when you begin to write your thesis.

6. Other matters: Honors theses are evaluated by the Chemistry or Biochemistry Honors advisor, who reads the thesis and consults with the faculty member who oversees the research and writing of the Honors thesis. Generally, students receive Honors, High Honors or Highest Honors depending on the quality of the thesis, the student's GPA and the faculty recommendation.

Specific questions regarding the writing and format of your thesis should be directed to your research advisor. If he/she cannot help, consult the honors major advisor.