

# Organizational Studies Honors Option

## The Organizational Studies Honors Option

The Organizational Studies Honors Option is designed to enable advanced undergraduate students to gain experience in the design, conduct, and analysis of research on organizations and organizational behavior. In the program, you will collaborate directly with a faculty mentor to complete an original research project. For students with strong academic records and an interest in research, the honors program can serve as a capstone for your undergraduate studies, and as important preparation for graduate studies or other career endeavors.

Organizational Studies majors are preparing for a wide variety of post-graduation activities. The Organizational Studies Honors Option (OSHO) is focused solely on research skills and activities, and you should be certain that you have a serious interest in research, demonstrated in your proposal, and the capability and desire to complete a prolonged independent study project culminating in a major empirical research paper.

## Overall Structure and Effort for Honors Option

During the junior year, you must apply for and be accepted into the OSHO. The application must include a detailed research proposal, and must be supported and signed by your faculty mentor. If admitted, you will enroll in the OS Senior Honors Research sequence in your senior year: OS 497 (fall term) + OS 498 (winter term). Both of these courses together will fulfill your Senior Research Capstone Experience requirement. These are independent study courses in which you will work on your research and thesis with your faculty mentor. You will also meet several times at designated intervals with the OS Honors Coordinator (and other honors majors) for ongoing assistance and support throughout the project. As an OS Honors major, you are also admitted to the Honors Program within LSA, and can receive additional support and academic advising through that office (see [lsa.umich.edu/honors/](http://lsa.umich.edu/honors/)).

If you decide to pursue the honors option, **your honors thesis will become a defining feature of your senior year**. Completing an honors research project requires a **commitment of at least two terms** working in an independent study format, meeting on a regular basis with a faculty mentor. This type of independent research project typically requires an **average effort of 9-12 hours per week for two terms**. A complete first draft of the thesis should be submitted to the faculty mentor early in the second semester of the project (by Feb 1). You must submit the final thesis for evaluation by a faculty panel in early March (deadline each year is the Friday immediately after spring break). You will participate in an oral defense/discussion of your thesis in late March, and will also present your work at a symposium in late April. If your thesis is approved and LSA cumulative gpa requirements are met, an Honors designation will appear on your transcript and diploma upon graduation.

## OS Honors Option Timeline (see following paragraphs for more details on each topic)

Junior Year							
Nov/Dec/Jan	by Feb 1	by mid Feb	by late Feb	by early March	mid-March	late April	
Identify research interests; if going abroad identify mentor before leaving	Identify faculty mentor (if not done already) and discuss project	Submit project proposal draft to faculty mentor for review	Submit final proposal to faculty mentor & obtain signature	Submit OSHO app and project proposal to OS	Receive decision from OS; Start research in summer if desired apply for OS funding and/or LSA Honors funding	Cohort meeting and attend Senior Honors Symposium; Complete IRB Submission	
Senior Year (OS 497)				Senior Year (OS 498)			
Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Conduct research	Continue research, meet with OS Honors Coordntr; Apply for LSA and OS funding if applicable	Complete research, organize & analyze data, meet with OS Honors Coordntr	Complete data analysis, outline thesis and begin writing sections. Meet with OS Honors Coordinator	<u>Early Jan:</u> Continue thesis work, reviewing section drafts with mentor <u>Late Jan:</u> Same as above, meet with OS Coordntr, identify indep reader	<u>Early Feb:</u> First complete thesis draft to mentor <u>Late Feb:</u> Revise thesis with mentor;	<u>Early March:</u> <b>THESIS COMPLETED</b> , final thesis to mentor & readers <u>Late Mar:</u> Oral defense of thesis to 3 readers, receive designation	<u>Late April:</u> Present thesis to OS community at Honors Symposium

## Getting Started - Identifying your Research Interests and Possible Faculty Mentors

Begin exploring your research interests during the first semester of your junior year (suggestions appear below).

- Refer to your OS Pathway to help define and focus your interests.
- Speak with the OS Honors Coordinator about your interests and goals. (The Coordinator has a list of OS affiliated faculty members and their research interests, which may assist you in identifying a mentor.)
- Speak with LSA Honors Program Advisor about your interests and goals. (Honors program advisors may also have suggestions for faculty mentors in your area of interest.)
- Read more about research discussed in your OS courses, and ask your professors and GSIs about their research interests and current projects.
- Watch for opportunities to become involved in research projects during the academic year or the summer.
- Review research talks presented at ICOS (Interdisciplinary Committee on Organizational Studies, [www.si.umich.edu/ICOS/](http://www.si.umich.edu/ICOS/)) or other venues.
- Visit departmental web pages and view faculty biographies, which will indicate their areas of past and future research interest.

## Next Step - Arranging Student-Faculty Collaboration on a Specific Project

By early February of the junior year (earlier if studying abroad), you should identify a specific Michigan faculty member who has research interests similar to your own. Your faculty mentor must be a tenure-track faculty member at the University of Michigan (may be non-OS and even non-LSA). Once identified, you can contact that faculty member and arrange to meet to discuss collaborating on a project of mutual interest. Successful partnerships often result from projects that extend ongoing research by the faculty mentor, but an original student project is also possible. For the honors project, you and the faculty member agree to work as a team for two terms to design and complete an empirical study. You should consult with your faculty mentor and get detailed feedback on all aspects of the proposal. Then, you submit your application for the OSHO (see below).

## Next Step - Formal Application to the OS Honors Option

To qualify for the OSHO, you must have a cumulative gpa of 3.4 or higher, and must maintain it through graduation. To apply to the OSHO, you must submit an application, including a project proposal that has been approved by the faculty mentor. The proposal should be a minimum of 5 pages, and must include:

- A brief overview of the project, including the research question to be answered;
- An explanation of the research design, data collection methods or data source to be used (include IRB submission date);
- A brief discussion of the analysis plan and expected results;
- A list of relevant references to the literature;
- An initial plan of work with a timeline.

## Deadline for submitting OS Honors Option application: early March of the junior year

Applications may be obtained at the OS Program office (713 Dennison) or on the OS web site.

Following submission of your OSHO application, the OS Honors Committee will review your proposal, and suggest any needed revisions. The Committee will then reach a final decision on the proposal and notify you and your mentor no later than mid to late April. If approved, research may start in the summer if feasible. If working with human subjects, commencement of research is conditional on IRB approval.

## Program Completion

As an honors major, you will complete an original research report (thesis) in collaboration with your faculty mentor. The thesis must be formatted as a standard research journal submission, and is **typically 30-40 pages in length**. You must submit the final thesis to your mentor and the OS program in early March (deadline each year is the Friday immediately after spring break).

Each thesis is evaluated by three readers: the faculty mentor; the OS Honors Program Coordinator; and an independent faculty reader. The independent faculty reader is chosen by you and your faculty mentor in early February, must be a tenure-track faculty member (may be non-LSA), and should be someone who has adequate knowledge of the research area to make a fair assessment of the project, but no previous connection to the project. You will orally defend and discuss your thesis to your three readers in late March, and following this defense, the readers will complete their evaluation and assign a designation of "honors", "high honors", or "highest honors" to the project.

To receive the honors designation on the college degree, **the faculty readers must approve the thesis and assign a designation, and you must have a cumulative gpa of at least 3.40 at graduation.**