### SENIOR YEAR AWAY?

Students who plan to study abroad or participate in off-campus internships or other experiences during their senior year should consider completing their Honors thesis or project in their junior year.

Such students should meet with a Commonwealth Honors College advisor as early as possible to discuss their plans and make appropriate arrangements.

### GRADUATION WITH DISTINCTION

To be eligible to graduate “with distinction,” CHC students must submit their thesis or project manuscripts and any artifacts to the Commonwealth Honors College office for forwarding to the University Archives.

### DOCUMENTATION

Upon completion of all research, students must document their results in a thesis or project manuscript.

Manuscripts must be typed and artifacts labeled according to the guidelines outlined on our website: [http://www.honors.umass.edu/capstone/formatting](http://www.honors.umass.edu/capstone/formatting)

General content guidelines are noted on the back panel of this brochure; requirements for content and format may vary per discipline (e.g., scientific research vs. creative endeavors).

#### Thesis Manuscripts

1. Title Page
2. Abstract (2 copies)
3. Introduction
4. Review of the literature of previous researchers
5. Methodology or critical approach
6. Presentation and discussion of research results
7. Conclusions and implications for future study
8. Bibliography
9. Appendix (optional)

#### Project Manuscripts

1. Title Page
2. Abstract (2 copies)
3. At least two of the following:
   - Contextual Information, e.g., a literature review or a discussion of theoretical or artistic influences
   - Process Information, e.g., what did you wish to achieve? How did you set out to achieve the goals?
   - Reflections, e.g., what did you learn or contribute? What changes would you make in hindsight? Implications or suggestions for the future?
4. Appendix (optional)

A project manuscript must accompany all project artifacts (including written artifacts not in thesis form). The manuscript's length and scope are determined by the thesis or project instructor or committee, but it must be minimally in the 5-10 page range.

Artifact examples include collections of poetry, slides/videotapes/CDs of creative work, case studies, engineering plans, etc.

### Further Assistance

- Honors Research Tools: [www.honors.umass.edu/research](http://www.honors.umass.edu/research)
- Commonwealth Honors College Advisors: advisor@honors.umass.edu or (413) 545-2483
- Honors Program Directors: [www.honors.umass.edu/hpd](http://www.honors.umass.edu/hpd)
HONORS THESIS OR PROJECT

The CHC Honors thesis or project is intended to provide all CHC students with the opportunity to work closely with faculty members to define and carry out in-depth research or creative endeavors. It provides excellent preparation for students who intend to continue their education through graduate study or begin their professional careers.

Honors thesis or project expectations are high. Whether the intended end-product is a traditional thesis manuscript or project manuscript with accompanying artifact(s), all theses and projects

- Are 6 credits or more of sustained research on a single topic, typically conducted over two semesters.
- Begin with creative inquiry and systematic research
- Include documentation of substantive scholarly endeavor
- Culminate in an oral defense or other form of public presentation

REGISTRATION OPTIONS

Students may choose to undertake research for their Honors thesis or project in one of two ways:

- Individually-contracted thesis or project
- Thesis or project seminar

Individually-contracted Thesis or Project

Independent research allows students to

- Pursue research on a topic or question of special interest to them
- Choose their own faculty mentors to serve on their guidance committee
- Produce a traditional thesis, or project manuscript with accompanying artifact, to best present their scholarly, scientific, or creative work
- Present their research results at an oral defense or other public forum

Honors Thesis or Project Seminar

Special topic thesis and project seminars afford students the opportunity to

- Develop and share their research in a seminar setting
- Collaborate with classmates
- Produce an individual or group thesis or project manuscript as a result of their scholarly, scientific, or creative work
- Present their work to classmates in lieu of an oral defense

REGISTRATION STEPS

Most Honors theses and projects are registered under a “499” course number. Registration steps vary according to the option selected.

Individually-contracted Thesis or Project

1. Students complete and submit a 499Y “Honors Research” or 499T/P “Honors Thesis/Project” registration contract and plan/proposal to the CHC office prior to the start of each semester of research. This is done via an online contract at www.honors.umass.edu/chc-paths.

   a. The 499Y contract must be accompanied by a “Semester Plan” which addresses:
      - Statement of the thesis or project topic
      - Key readings
      - Specialized training
      - Timeline

   b. The 499T/P contract must be accompanied by a “Final Proposal” which addresses:
      - Introduction
      - Review of Literature
      - Method
      - Evaluation
      - Communication
      - Timeline

2. CHC registers the student’s thesis or project credits after review and approval of the contract and proposal.

Honors Thesis or Project Seminar

1. Students should review Honors thesis and project seminars listed in the on-line Honors Course Guide: www.honors.umass.edu/courseguide

   a. Select the “Honors Thesis/Project Seminars” box in the “Course Types” section.

1. Follow the course description instructions to obtain instructor permission or register directly on

For details regarding documentation & credentials, please read the Commonwealth Honors College website sections below.

- Honors Thesis or Project General Info: www.honors.umass.edu/capstone
- Honors Thesis or Project Proposal: www.honors.umass.edu/independent-capstone-proposal
- Honors Thesis or Project Forms: www.honors.umass.edu/forms