



STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHC PATHS

www.honors.umass.edu/chc-paths

1 LOG IN

Visit www.honors.umass.edu/chc-paths.

Log in using your UMass NetID and password.

2 START A NEW CONTRACT

Determine which type of course contract you would like to create:

499Y: Part I of Honors Thesis or Project

To enroll in the first semester of an independent Honors Thesis/Project.

499T/P: Part II of Honors Thesis or Project

To enroll in the second semester of an independent two-semester Honors Thesis/Project.

To enroll in a one-semester 6-credit Honors Thesis/Project.

ISH: Independent Study Honors

To enroll in an independent study.

3 INFORMATION

Review relevant details about submitting a course contract.

4 STUDENT SECTION

Review the information about your major and honors plan. Contact a CHC advisor to make changes.

Indicate the faculty member(s) who will guide your independent work.

Enter the number of weekly hours you will dedicate to your independent work.

5 SEMESTER PLAN/PROPOSAL

As part of the course contract, the semester plan or proposal is a binding contract (similar to a course syllabus) that outlines expectations. Students should complete each section of the proposal and consult the faculty member for guidance.

6 FINISH/SUBMIT

Save the form to return later and make further revisions. Submit it if you have entered all of the requested information and are ready to submit it for review.

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COMMONWEALTH HONORS COLLEGE

University of Massachusetts Amherst

499Y HONORS RESEARCH: CONTRACT AND REGISTRATION FORM PART I OF HONORS THESIS OR PROJECT

Submit using CHC PATHS: www.honors.umass.edu/chc-paths

Create a 499Y honors research contract to enroll in the first semester of a two-semester Honors Thesis/Project. Consult this document when completing the online form.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

- Students initiate an independent two-semester honors research contract by signing into CHC PATHS and submitting a 499Y Honors Research: Contract and Registration Form.
- Students must identify a committee chair before submitting a research contract.
- Students complete each section of the 499Y Honors Research: Contract and Registration Form and submit it for review and approval.
- After a student submits the form, it will be reviewed by:
 - The research committee chair
 - The Honors Program Director in the department in which the thesis/project will be registered (typically the student's major)
 - The Honors Program Director in the student's department
 - The CHC Council Academic Standards Committee
- Upon approval by all of the above, enrollment in 499Y Honors Research will be completed by Commonwealth Honors College.
- If necessary, students should contact their academic dean to request a credit overload and remove any holds on their SPIRE account that might hinder course registration.

The length of the process depends on multiple factors, but is typically completed by the end of the Add/Drop period. Commonwealth Honors College recognizes that many students need the Honors Thesis/Project credits to reach full-time status and makes the effort to enroll students as quickly as possible.

DEADLINE

It is recommended that the 499Y Honors Research: Contract and Registration Form be submitted during the registration period (in November or April) in the semester *before* the Honors Thesis/Project work begins. The form is accepted through the end of the Add/Drop period of the semester when the Honors Thesis/Project work occurs.

Proposals submitted on the last day of Add/Drop and those requiring revision will go through the late-add process.

CREDITS

Students indicate the number of hours to be devoted to the honors research each week. The number of weekly hours corresponds to the number of credits to be earned. The committee chair assigns the number of credits using the university's standard ratio of three hours of student work each week per credit (i.e., 3 credits = 9 hours of work each week for 13 weeks). Credits are approved by the Honors Program Director before enrollment.

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GRADING

As the first part of a two-semester effort, the 499Y may be graded with a “Y” instead of standard letter grade (A through F). The “Y” grade serves as a placeholder until the second semester work is complete and a final grade is submitted for 499T (or 499P). At that point, the Y grade is revised.

499Y SEMESTER PLAN

As part of the 499Y Honors Research Contract and Registration Form, the semester plan is a binding contract (similar to a course syllabus) that outlines expectations. It protects students and committee members from misunderstandings that might cause grading problems. Students should complete each section of the semester plan and consult the committee chair for guidance.

1. STATEMENT REGARDING THE GOAL OF THE THESIS OR PROJECT

What do you intend to research and hope to discover or create during your Honors Thesis/Project experience?

2. KEY READINGS

List the key readings for the 499Y semester.

3. COMMUNICATION

- How often will you meet with your Committee Chair?
- What are your Committee Chair’s expectations of such meetings?
- What time commitment is expected to be applied to your research between meetings with your Committee Chair? (For example, 10 hours of work per week.)

4. SPECIALIZED TRAINING

If work on your thesis or project should require specialized training (e.g., human/animal subjects testing, lab-safety instruction, survey technique), please specify the type of training required and when and from whom that training will be obtained.

5. METHODOLOGY

- If you have already begun or will start your actual research early in the 499Y semester, then your 499Y Semester Plan must include a description of the methodology that you and your Committee Chair have agreed upon.
- If your research will begin later in the 499Y semester, then your 499Y-Semester Plan must include a deadline date by which you and your Chair will have agreed upon your methodology. This agreement must precede the onset of your research, and the methodology must then be described in your proposal for the 499T/499P semester.

6. TIMELINE

Include deadline dates and specific expectations for:

- An assignment due before the end of the “Withdrawal Period” (see UMass Academic Calendar). For example, a summary of the initially assigned readings, a draft of one or more sections of your Thesis/Project proposal, or even a first draft of a chapter of your Thesis/Project.
- Any other first-semester assignments (weekly lab reports, annotated bibliography, other benchmarks) specified by your Committee Chair.
- Selection of second committee member.
- Online submission of the “499T/P Honors Thesis/Project Contract” form with affiliated Honors Thesis/Project Proposal.