

A person with long dark hair, wearing a grey knit sweater, is holding a lit sparkler. The sparkler is bright and glowing, with many sparks flying out. The background is a dark, solid blue color. The text is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

So You Want To Do
AN HONORS PROJECT



HONORS PROJECT

Let's start with what you need to know...



Almost any course can become an Honors Project...

An Honors project consists of additional independent work a student chooses to undertake in consultation with an instructor/mentor. Students who successfully complete an Honors project will receive credit for HON 201. Students may pursue an Honors project in three ways:

- ❑ 1-credit attached to a non-Honors, non-developmental, and non-independent study course
- ❑ 1-3 credit standalone Honors project under the supervision of a faculty Mentor
- ❑ 1-credit project to be presented at the state Undergraduate Research Conference .

NOTE: A single project may not receive credit for more than one option.



A word about the Massachusetts Undergraduate Research Conference (URC)

Every April, UMASS Amherst hosts Mass URC, a one-day research conference for students from the 28 public colleges and universities across the Commonwealth. Students present their research, share knowledge and learn from their peers.

Students who present at Mass URC and would like to receive one HCCHonors credit must submit the Project Final Submission Form to their mentor and the Honors Program office. Visit <https://www.honors.umass.edu/undergraduate-research-conference> or stop by Frost 270 for more information about the UMASS Undergraduate Research Conference.



No matter what form your project takes, it must be well researched. You will work together with a faculty mentor to create a project. Project topics are limited only by your imagination or ability, the faculty mentor guidelines, and a regard for the degree of academic rigor expected by the HCC Honors Program.

To be eligible for the Honors Project (HON 201), you must:

- Have a GPA of 3.5 or the permission of an instructor
- If HON 201 is being attached to a course, you must be earning a “B” or better in it.

Honors projects may not be attached to 0-level courses, to independent studies, to the Honors Colloquium, to Honors Learning Communities or to ENG 101.



What you need to know...

- ★ Honors projects require reading (books and articles), significant writing (research and analysis), and oral presentations with both a focus on deeper analytical skills (quality) and sometimes longer research (quantity).
- ★ Make sure to review the guidelines for doing an honors project.
- ★ You will be receiving feedback from the Honors subcommittee.
- ★ You should meet with an HCC Librarian for assistance on research.
- ★ The feedback from both the subcommittee and librarian requires that revisions and possibly new sources be added to your work.
- ★ The Honors project Proposal asks for at least 3 reference sources.
- ★ And yes, honors classes and projects will assist you in applying to competitive schools.



Before beginning work on a project, you must consult with an HCC Reference Librarian, who will advise you about research—or, in some cases, certify that the project does not require traditional library resources.

TYPES OF HONORS PROJECTS



Option A: Research Project

Your project should

- develop and investigate a research question that needs to be explored/answered
- engage in critical analysis of social science, humanities, and/or interdisciplinary work
- result in a paper of at least 10 pages, excluding the abstract and works cited pages
- conform to MLA, APA, or Chicago documentation depending on discipline and faculty mentor guidelines.

TYPES OF HONORS PROJECTS



Option B: Creative projects

In the medium of your choice, you will explore a question or problem within that medium.

NOTE: The Music Department has specific requirements—contact Elissa Brill Pashkin for more information. In completing your creative project, you should:

- create and present your work on campus and/or in the community
- invest at least as much as would be required for a traditional research project. Again, conversations with your faculty mentor are critical.

TYPES OF HONORS PROJECTS



Option C: Civic Engagement/Service Learning projects

This option allows you to work with a community organization to develop and implement a range of projects. Students may:

- conduct community-based research that will benefit a community-based organization; for example, researching water quality in a nearby brook and reporting your findings to interested community partners;
- design a specific project in conjunction with a community partner around a course issue/topic/theme; for example, an environmental design course where you create a new garden for an organization that promotes sustainability;
- develop other civic engagement opportunities in consultation with your faculty advisor; these may include letter writing campaigns or other action oriented work around an issue or topic related to the course.

TYPES OF HONORS PROJECTS



Option D: Fieldwork/Lab Work

This option allows you to do either of the following:

- Laboratory or fieldwork research on an existing topic, which will provide you with direct lab or fieldwork research experience;
- Anthropological fieldwork-based research using ethnographic methodologies; you will learn and practice qualitative research techniques with real world applications.

TYPES OF HONORS PROJECTS



Option E: Original Design / Problem-Based Project or Advanced Study (STEM)

This option allows you to do either of the following:

- Original project/problem-based research, which allows STEM students to work on a design problem or on a project that can be built or tested, such as a computer program or an engineering project;
- Research that is experimental, theoretical or computational. This type of project would allow you to learn advanced concepts on your own and gain research experience by trying to answer mathematical/scientific questions and write in a style appropriate for scientific research.



START

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STEP 1

DETERMINE YOUR TOPIC

Print for
your mentor

Discuss your interests with your professor and/or the Honors Program Coordinator (Frost 270)...

Ask one of them to be your mentor.

Before meeting with your mentor to begin work on the Honors Project Proposal, print and read these guidelines for completing an Honors Project.

You will also need to print the [HON 201: 1-3 Credit Honors Project Proposal](#) when you meet with your mentor. This document is available at www.hcc.edu/honors.

Also print copies of the forms below to give to your mentor .

[How To Be A Faculty Mentor In the Honors Program](#) and the [Honors Program Faculty Mentor Form](#)

Ask your mentor to sign the Faculty Mentor Form. You should submit this form to the Honors Office (Frost 270).

All of these forms can be found at www.hcc.edu/honors .

Print and
read!

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STEP 2

PREPARE PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM

*due in Frost 270
by November 5 or
March 20!*

MEET WITH YOUR MENTOR to discuss your topic and prepare your Honors Project Proposal.

The Honors Project Proposal form is to be completed by the student and the faculty mentor. It should then be submitted to the Honors Program Coordinator (Frost 270) by the student **by early November for the fall semester or late March for the spring semester** .

Your proposal will be reviewed by the Honors Subcommittee. Be sure to provide sufficient detail in your proposal so that faculty outside of your proposed field will understand the topic. Your mentor should review and sign your proposal before the Honors Program Coordinator receives it. You will be given feedback with enough time to complete your project in the same semester. A project need not be completed in the semester in which it was begun; however, it must be completed before you graduate to receive credit.

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STEP 3

REGISTER AND PAY FOR YOUR HONORS PROJECT CREDIT

GETTING CREDIT FOR YOUR HONORS PROJECT

Students Wanting To Using Financial Aid ...

must register no later than the end of Add/Drop in the same semester they are doing the project. If a student does not complete the project and drops HON 201, it could disrupt their Financial Aid. If you have questions about this, please contact Financial Aid **BEFORE** withdrawing from HON 201. Please note that the course will also show on the student's transcript as a withdrawal.

Students Paying Out of Pocket...

can register for HON 201 at any time during the semester. If the student chooses not to complete the project, the project will not be submitted for the Honors Committee review and the student will not register for HON 201. This will ensure that an Honors Project that is not completed will not show up on the student's transcript.

If the student chooses not to complete the project, they must notify their mentor and the Honors Office in Frost 270.

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STEP 4

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL

SUBMIT YOUR HONORS PROJECT PROPOSAL...

to the Honors Program Coordinator by dropping it off at the Honors Program office in Frost 270 on Monday, Wednesday or Friday between 9am to 3pm.

Before beginning work on a project, you must consult with an HCC Reference Librarian, who will advise you about research—or, in some cases, certify that the project does not require traditional library resources.



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STEP 5

FEEDBACK AND REVISION

FEEDBACK AND REVISION

The Honors Program Coordinator will submit your proposal to the Honors Committee. You will receive feedback on your proposal from the Honors Committee in one of two ways:

1.) We will ask you to meet with the Honors Program Coordinator and your faculty mentor (usually about 2-3 weeks after you have submitted your proposal);

OR

2.) We will send feedback via email.

The feedback from both the subcommittee and librarian requires that revisions and possibly new sources be added to your work.



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STEP 6

RESEARCH AND FINALIZE

**Print for
submission**

YOU ALSO NEED TO KNOW...

Your mentor must meet with you regularly for approximately 10 hours over the course of the semester to guide you in narrowing your project topic, conducting appropriate research, and analyzing the research. Your mentor will assist you with finalizing the Honors work, including the reflective essay, and will advise you on how to present the final project.

When you complete your project, you will write a short reflective essay in which you describe, explain, and evaluate your work—see the Honors 201: Student Project Submission Guidelines on the HCC Honors webpage for writing requirements.

For most Honors projects you will also need to write a report that meets the expectations of your discipline. At this time, you will also complete the [HON 201 1-Credit Final Submission Form](#). This form can be found at www.hcc.edu/honors.

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STEP 7

SHORT REFLECTIVE ESSAY

SHORT REFLECTIVE ESSAY FOR ALL HONORS PROJECTS

If you are completing a research project, your project should:

- develop and investigate a research question that needs to be explored/answered
- engage in critical analysis of social science, humanities, and/or interdisciplinary work
- result in a paper of at least 10 pages, excluding the abstract and works cited pages
- conform to MLA, APA, or Chicago documentation

If you are complete a creative project, civic engagement/service learning project, field work or lab work, an original design, problem-based project or advanced study (STEM), you will also need to:

- write a report that meets the expectations of your discipline
- complete the HON 201: 1-Credit Final Project Submission Form

All Honors projects will include a completed, approximately 2 page reflective essay that reveals what you learned from your Honors Project experience. Describe, explain, and evaluate your work.

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STEP 8

SUBMIT YOUR HONORS PROJECT

SUBMIT YOUR HONORS PROJECT

Print and deliver a paper copy of your final project and reflective essay, as well as the Final Submission Form, to Frost 270 for final signature.

Once you submit your Honors Project complete with all signatures to the Honors Coordinator in Frost 270, go to the Student Records Office (Frost 221) to register for HON 201. You then pay for the one credit, which will transfer as a general elective.

NOTE: Projects completed before final exams week will be reviewed and finalized in the same semester; however, projects finished during or after final exams week will not be reviewed until the following semester. Your transcript will list the title of your Honors Project and the grade you received.

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Sample Honors Proposal Page 1

Example of An Honors Proposal

HCC Honors Program
URC Proposal
4/20/18

Employment opportunities in STEM are predicted to continue to grow at a higher rate than non-STEM jobs in the next decade (Shapiro, Bustos-Selfridge, and Carton, 2017). To be able to take advantage of the economic needs and participate in a society that increasingly depends on mathematics and technology, students need a good background in advanced mathematics and science (Hill, Corbett, St. Rose, & Women, 2010). Unfortunately, our educational system fails many students when it comes to their mathematics preparation, where US students are drastically outperformed by students in other countries (National Science Board [NSB], 2016).

The hypothesis of this study, is that, as espoused by the Common Core standards, and by the National Council of Teachers in Mathematics (NCTM), using varied pedagogies is essential to learning complex mathematical concepts. Using more tactile, real-life examples caters to students who learn outside of formal computation which can contribute to the methods with which educators attempt to teach their students. Nevertheless, this research project provides a great opportunity to study why professors teach in a particular manner from the perspective of a current student and tutor:

In this project, I define "high-quality" lessons as lessons that are of high mathematical content via diverse approaches, such as graphs, tables, equations, contextual problems, that focus on student problem solving, rather than an instructor reciting information. The research proposes to examine how the enactment of "high-quality" mathematics lessons impact students' interest, motivation, engagement, and

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Sample Honors Proposal - Page 2

comprehension of Calculus at a local university. To coincide, the study will review the existing literature around the connection between student achievement in mathematics and learning, then use classroom observations, surveys, and more, to collect data to support the studies' hypothesis.

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Sample Honors Proposal - Works Cited

Works Cited

Hill, C., Dr., Corbett, C., Di., & Rose, A.S., Di; (2010, February), Why So Few? Retrieved from <https://www.aauw.org/files/2013/02/Why-So-Few-Women-in-Science-Technology-Engineering-and-Mathematics.pdf>

National Science Board. (n.d.). Student Learning in Mathematics and Science, Retrieved April 23, 2018, from <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2016/nsb20161/>

Shapiro, Dr., Bustos-Selfridge, G., & Carton, G. (2017, November 27), Emerging Careers (M, L, Walshok Dr., F.d), Retrieved from <https://extension.ucsd.edu/UCSDExtension/media/UCSDExtensionsMedia/community-and-research/center-for-research/2017-Emerging-Careers-Report.pdf>



QUESTIONS?

Contact: The Honors Program Coordinator(s) at the honorsprogram@hcc.edu or visit the office at Frost 270.